

PLUCK AND LUCK

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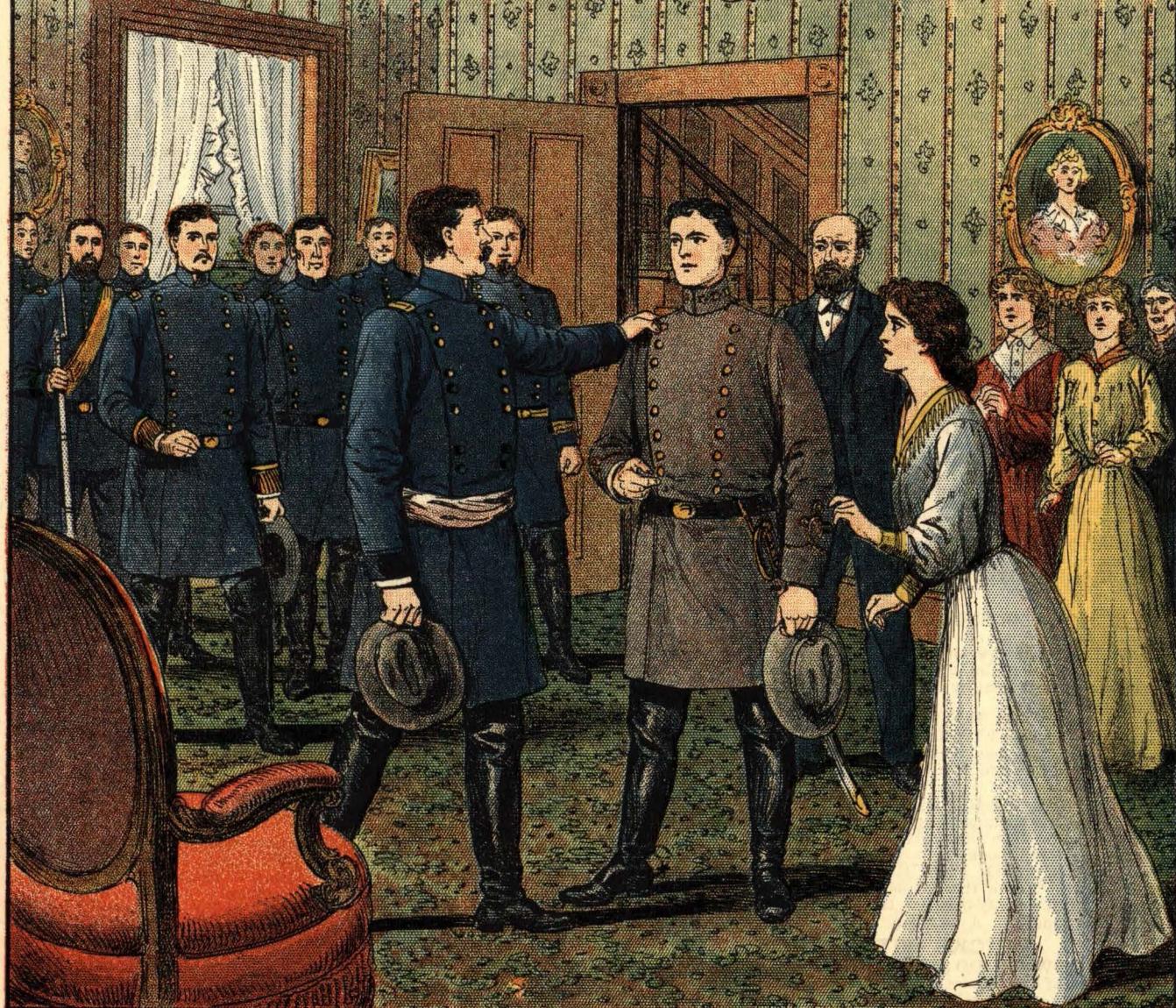
No. 307.

NEW YORK, APRIL 20, 1904.

Price 5 Cents.

UP FROM THE RANKS; OR, FROM CORPORAL TO GENERAL.

(A STORY OF THE GREAT REBELLION.) By GEN'L JAS. A. GORDON.



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A STORY OF THE GREAT REBELLION.

BY GEN'L JAMES A. GORDON.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST VOLUNTEER.

A great battle had been fought.

The stars and stripes had gone down in defeat at Bull Run, and humiliation and alarm seemed to settle on the hearts of the loyal men who wanted to see the Union preserved intact.

The excitement all over the North was such that no pen has ever been able to adequately describe it, nor brush portray it.

But the defeat did not settle the matter in dispute between the two sections. On the contrary, both sides at once began to prepare for battles on a scale compared with which Bull Run was a mere skirmish.

When the news of the battle reached Dover, in the State of New York, the little town was thrown into a fever of excitement. The same was the case in all the other towns in the country, North and South.

Men with pallid faces hurried to and fro, eager to catch the latest bit of news. Women trembled and thought of the thousands of brave men who were lying out there on that bloody field on that midsummer night.

But when Judge Holmes, the most prominent man in Dover, stood on the steps of the post-office and read the news to the crowd, he told them that the die was cast.

"You rallied to the defense of the flag," he said, "when the news came that Sumter had fallen. A magnificent army sprang to arms. That army is now beaten, routed, and in full retreat on Washington. We are in for a big war. The enemy knows how to fight. They believe they are right just as firmly and sincerely as we believe they are wrong. They are fighting for what they believe to be their legal constitutional rights. We can no longer discuss that question with them. The time for that has now passed. We must fight to save the Union. I went to Mexico with Scott and followed the

old flag from Vera Cruz to the capital of the Montezumas through a series of bloody battles. I know what it was. I am too old now to go to the field again. Sixty years lie heavily on me. But I will help those who go as long as I have a dollar in the bank or a crust of bread in the cupboard. We must raise a company here in Dover to help uphold the old flag. Who will be the first volunteer from Dover?"

"I will!" promptly came from a manly-looking youth in the crowd.

Instantly every eye was turned on him, and he held up his hand above his head, adding:

"Put me down first—Will Herbert!"

The judge looked at him in silent admiration for a moment or two, and then said:

"You are young, and—"

"I am old enough to fight for the Union," said the youth, interrupting him. "I am nineteen, and can lick any man of ninety or even a hundred!"

There was a roar of laughter, and the next moment scores were crying out:

"Put me down! Put me down next!"

The judge put down their names as fast as he could get them in a little note-book which he took from his pocket as he stood there on the steps of the post-office. In less than a half hour he had a list of eighty names, two-thirds of whom were young men who had been born and reared within a radius of three miles of the post-office.

"Now get together and organize before you go to bed to-night," said the judge, "and I'll write a letter to the President, telling him that you are coming to sustain the Union and the old flag."

The utmost enthusiasm prevailed in the crowd. Those who had given their names got into a knot by themselves, and found that a little deliberation was required before organizing.

"Mr. Pettingill offers the ballroom of his hotel for your organization, boys!" sung out the judge, after the landlord

of the hotel had whispered to him. "Come on over there, and I'll help you get into shape!" and he led the way down and across the street to the village hotel, followed by the whole crowd of citizens.

The big room was soon in a blaze of light. The landlord had every lamp lit, and the judge called out the names on the list. Those who answered at once passed upstairs to the ball-room.

When they were all in the door was locked, and the judge called them to order. Under his guidance they proceeded at once to elect officers.

"Whom will you have for your 'captain?'" he asked, and a half dozen names were suggested at once. They were all youths who knew nothing about military organizations or duties. He saw that a very popular youth of some twenty years of age would get the votes of a majority of the youths, and would be elected. He also knew that the youth was not of the right stuff for an officer.

"See here, boys," he said. "I've been a soldier, you know. Let me give you a bit of advice. There is one name on this list who was a brave soldier under Scott in Mexico. He is old enough to be a father to nearly every one of you, and yet young enough to lead you into battle. If you have a man of experience at your head it will go much easier with you in the long run because he will know his business. Elect Mr. Coombs your captain. He was wounded at Chapultepec, and I see that he has volunteered to go again under the old flag."

It was something of a wet blanket for the boys, for Coombs was a poor mechanic, fifty years old, and very reserved in his manners. But they knew that he had been a brave soldier, and so they followed his advice and unanimously elected him captain.

He rose to his feet and looked around at the boys. They sat still and silent, expecting him to say something, and he did.

"You have elected me, boys," he said. "The judge has told you that I fought under Scott. So I did. He never lost a battle. Why? The Mexicans were brave; they fought hard. But Scott knew the art of war and his soldiers their duty. Now what is the first duty of a soldier? It is to obey orders. Now I will not accept until you stand up and say you will obey orders. Will you do it?"

Every man of them sprang to his feet and sung out:

"We will."

"Even unto death!" added Will Herbert in clear, ringing tones.

They caught his spirit, and with ringing cheers added:

"Even unto death!"

"That is enough, boys," said the newly-elected captain. "I shall never send you where I would not lead you. I shall never say 'go,' but 'come,' and lead you right at the enemy."

"That is the kind of talk!" exclaimed the judge. "I know some of those Secessionists. They are brave men, and nothing but hard fighting is going to whip them. Now for your first and second officers. Whom will you have for your first lieutenant?"

Ben Risley was elected.

Sam Joslyn was made second lieutenant.

At last, after the sergeants had been chosen, Judge Holmes said:

"Now honor the young man who was the first to put his name on the list—Will Herbert. Make him a corporal."

Will Herbert was a machinist, and did not run about with the boys of Dover much, hence they would never have thought of giving him any position if the judge had not suggested it.

But they were in the mood to be guided by the judge and Captain Coombs, and he was unanimously elected first corporal, after which the organization was soon completed.

"I'll now tender the services of this company to the gov-

ernor of the State, and through him to the President," said Judge Holmes. "By the way, what name will you go by?"

"I suggest the 'Dover Guards,'" said Corporal Herbert.

"That is a good name," said the judge, and it was adopted.

The judge then wrote the letter tendering the company's services and asking for arms. He read it to the boys, who greeted its ringing sentences with rousing cheers, after which Captain Coombs sang out:

"Now form in line and follow me out to the green and I'll give you a little taste of the drill before you go to bed."

Their enthusiasm was equal to any demand made upon them, and so they formed in line and followed him downstairs and out on the street.

More than half the town were there waiting to hear from the organization. They followed them to the green and stood by watching the drill. Everybody was soon convinced that Captain Coombs knew his business.

But the astonishment of the crowd came when Corporal Herbert showed a perfect familiarity with military tactics.

He had been studying them ever since Sumter fell, and old Coombs himself could not tell him anything he didn't know.

"Can you drill a squad, corporal?" the captain asked.

"Yes, captain."

"Then take that squad and put 'em through."

He did so with such ease and celerity that the old soldier said:

"They should have made you the captain."

"Not so, captain," he said. "You have faced the enemy in battle, and know what to do. You are the right man in the right place."

"Yes," said Lieutenant Risley. "It would break up the company to change officers now."

"No changes will be made," said the captain. "Go on with the drill, corporal."

Corporal Herbert put them through the drill with the energy and discipline of an old soldier, and the crowd who stood by and looked on, particularly the young ladies, were unstinted in their praise of his skill and soldierly bearing.

When the drill was over it was nearly midnight. The young men at once sought their girl friends in the crowd to escort them home.

Lieutenant Risley had been paying attention to Mary Holmes, the daughter of the judge, and the gossips of Dover had nearly engaged them. He joined her at once, thinking she would be awed in the presence of an officer of his rank.

"So you are going as lieutenant?" she asked as she leaned on his arm.

"Yes, first lieutenant," he replied, holding his head up as became an officer. "Mr. Coombs, the old Mexican War veteran, is to be captain."

"Yes. He is an old soldier like father. What a pity, though, they did not make young Will Herbert captain instead of a corporal."

"Make Herbert captain!"

"Yes. He knows as much about drilling men as any old soldier."

"Oh, anybody can learn to be a drill master. But everybody can't command men."

"No. But he seemed to me to-night to be one born to command. His words of command seemed to come from one in authority."

"That was because so many were looking on. The idea of a common mechanic like him commanding anybody!"

"I thought he commanded well to-night, and admired him. He would look splendid in the uniform of an officer."

"I don't think you will ever see him in one. He isn't the kind of man that heroes are made of."

"I expect to see him a general," said Mary. "He was the first one to volunteer to-night."

Her words maddened him, filling his soul with jealous hate of the young corporal.

CHAPTER II.

OFF FOR THE FRONT.

Events came thick and fast on the heels of the Bull Run disaster. Half a million men began arming on both sides. Every train north and south carried regiments to the front, while others were drilling and making ready for the conflict.

The Dover Guards drilled day and night. Corporal Herbert, the son of a poor widow, developed wonderful skill as a drill master, and the citizens began to brag that the Dover Guards would go to the front as the best drilled company in the army. His young sister, just a little past sixteen years of age, while proud of him in his new sphere, was inconsolable over his enlistment.

He was the main support of herself and mother. No wonder she grieved at the idea of his going to war.

When their uniforms came everybody turned out to see them parade and drill.

Their arms came, too, and now they began to feel and look like soldiers.

But the most soldierly looking of all the younger members was the gallant corporal.

Captain Coombs had shown a keen appreciation of his soldierly qualities ever since the night of the organization of the company. On that eventful afternoon he gave him an unexpected token of his confidence in him as a young man to be depended on in an emergency.

Just as the uniform drill was about to end, Captain Coombs was informed that Mary Holmes, on behalf of the ladies of Dover, was going to present them with a silk flag.

He ordered parade rest and waited for the presentation.

Miss Holmes came forward with a beautiful silk flag, and, in a neat little speech full of patriotic sentiments, and praise of the brave defenders of the Union, presented it to the company—the captain receiving it.

Then the big crowd looked at the boys and they looked at him, as did everybody else.

"Ladies," said he, blushing and stammering, "I can't make a speech. I'd rather go into battle right now than be caught in a fix like this. I say, lieutenant, you take it and thank 'em for it."

Lieutenant Risley turned pale and shook his head. He would have liked nothing better if time had been given him to get up a speech.

There was no time to lose.

"Corporal Herbert to the front!"

The surprised corporal stepped out and saluted.

"Take this flag and thank the ladies for it—er—for the company," stammered the captain.

He saluted the captain as he took the flag from his hands, and then, turning to the ladies and citizens, said, in a clear, ringing tone of voice:

"The first duty of a soldier is to obey orders. My captain has ordered me to thank you for this beautiful flag. My heart gives the same command, and the impulse of my soul sanctions it. We thank you, ladies of Dover, for your interest in us and the cause for which some of us are going to die. This flag will float over some of us as we breathe our last, and here now, while yet we live, we pledge to you our solemn honor to defend it with our lives, and to carry it aloft in the face of the enemy as long as one of us can stand on our feet. We know little about war. We are going to the front to fight for this Union of our fathers. We will soon know what war

is, and when we come home again, crowned with victory over secession, we shall be well paid if we can face you as we do this day, and hear you say 'well done, good and faithful soldiers!'

It was a short speech and unpremeditated. But it created an immense enthusiasm. The soldiers cheered and the ladies waved their handkerchiefs.

Captain Coombs ran up to him, and grasping his hand said: "It was the best I ever heard, corporal! General Scott couldn't have done better himself!"

"Give me your hand, corporal!" exclaimed Judge Holmes, rushing up to him. "That was the neatest little off-hand speech I ever listened to, and the most pointed one, too!" and he wrung his hand cordially as he spoke.

"Thunder and lightning, Will!" cried an old citizen, as he grasped his hand. "Where did you learn to make bright little speeches like that?"

"I am sure I don't know," he replied. "I never made a speech in my life, nor ever expected to. I only knew that I must obey orders. If the captain had told me to take the flag-staff and I am you all with it, I'd have obeyed him."

"That's the sort of men heroes are made of," remarked the judge. "Here, come with me a moment. Excuse me, captain. I want to introduce him to the ladies of the committee," and he dragged him away to the spot where the ladies were congregated, and introduced him to them.

It was a tight place for him, for he was never a ladies' man. But they received him so cordially, and said so many pleasant things about his speech, that he soon forgot his awkwardness.

His sister Winnie rushed up to him and kissed him in her enthusiastic pride over his sudden triumph, saying:

"I didn't know you could make a speech, brother."

"Neither did I," he said, laughing, "and I don't know that I can. I don't think I could again. The captain's order took me so much by surprise that I don't know a thing that I said."

"Oh, it was the grandest little speech I ever heard," put in Mary Holmes. "It made me quite ashamed of mine, and I sat up nearly all night trying to write out a good one, too."

"It was a good one," he said. "It gave me the inspiration for mine."

"What a nice compliment! I am sure I thank you ever so much."

Others came up, and the conversation became general, in which the young corporal bore his part with a good deal of spirit.

By and by one of the guards came up and tapped him on the shoulder, saying:

"Lieutenant Risley wishes to see you. He is over there near the pump."

Young Herbert excused himself to the ladies and hastened to see what the lieutenant wanted of him.

To his surprise he found the young officer in a towering rage. He saluted and said:

"You sent for me, lieutenant?"

"Yes. You have grossly insulted me," replied the officer, "and I demand an apology at your hands."

"I am not aware of having done so," said the corporal. "I certainly did not intend to do so. How have I offended?"

"Your allusion to the first duty of a soldier was intended to reflect on me—your superior officer."

"I beg your pardon, sir. It was not so intended, nor was it any reflection on you. I was——"

"You lie! You were——"

Quick as a flash the corporal dealt him a blow between the eyes that laid him out at full length on his back.

The next moment he was seized by other members of the company, and held so as to prevent any further disturbance.

In a moment nearly everybody on the grounds had gathered

around the pump. An officer had been struck by a soldier, and many believed that the corporal would be shot for the offense.

Captain Coombs came up and asked what the trouble was.

"He struck me, captain," said the lieutenant. "Put him under guard and I'll prefer charges against him for striking an officer."

The corporal laughed.

"Like a coward, you want to skulk behind the code of military discipline," he said. "But we have not been mustered into service yet, hence that refuge cannot avail you anything. You are a cowardly poltroon, and utterly lacking in any of the qualities of a gentleman."

"Gentlemen, stop!" said the captain. "This is unbecoming in both of you. Go to the armory and let's see about this thing," and he called the company to attention again and marched them to the hall which had been tendered for their use by the landlord of the hotel.

Then the captain demanded a statement from each as to the cause of the fracas. The lieutenant claimed that he had been insulted by the corporal in a public place, in the presence of hundreds of people.

"Did you mean to insult him, corporal?" the captain asked.

"No, and I so stated to him, which is all any gentleman could have asked for. But he told me I lied, and I knocked him down."

"You did right," said the captain. "Lieutenant Risley, you must apologize to Corporal Herbert, or I'll prefer a charge of conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman against you."

Risley was dumfounded.

"How can you try me if we are not yet mustered into service?" he demanded.

"The company can decide whether you are to be their lieutenant at any time they please before they are mustered into service," was the captain's reply.

Risley hated the handsome corporal because Mary Holmes had praised him, and because he had made the hit of the day in the flag presentation affair. To have to make an apology where he had demanded one, after having been knocked down in the presence of hundreds of spectators, was the most humiliating thing in the world to him.

Yet he had it to do, and he did it so ungraciously that nobody was satisfied with it. He then demanded that the corporal should also apologize.

"I've nothing to apologize for," said Herbert, promptly. "I will not apologize for resenting an insult."

"You are not required to do so," said the captain. "But permit me to say that had we been in service you would have been shot for striking your superior officer."

"Yes, I am well aware of that fact," said the corporal.

The company was dismissed, and the members gathered in groups to discuss the episode. It was a bad affair for the lieutenant at the time, and many of the boys wondered at his intense hatred of the corporal.

"If Corporal Herbert does not resign and leave the company it will go hard with him when we get into service," remarked one of the boys. "The lieutenant will then have him in his power."

"Yes, so he will. The corporal ought to get out now."

"But he won't," said another. "He is not afraid of anything or anybody."

The whole town talked over the matter, and the young lieutenant was condemned by all save his own personal friends. He belonged to a rich family and therefore had quite a number of friends as against the young machinist.

But Mary Holmes was very emphatic in her praise of the corporal's conduct, a fact that made Risley feel very much like murdering him in cold blood.

A few days later the lieutenant and corporal were notified

that the Dover Guards had been ordered to hurry on to Washington and report to the adjutant general.

They both met at the post-office, and when they came away the lieutenant spoke to him, the first time since he apologized to him.

"Corporal, I would advise you not to go. You had better resign at once."

"Why?" Herbert asked.

"Because if you do I'll make life a burden to you after we are mustered into service."

"That is enough. I'll go. But look here. I'll resent an insult all the same—in the service or out of it—and if I am forced to strike you and get shot for it, I'll simply kill you on the spot and have something to be shot for. Do you understand? We may as well have an understanding now as not."

The lieutenant turned pale as death, but did not make any reply. He found that he had an intrepid character to contend with, and so concluded to say no more to him.

The next day the guards marched to the train and boarded it for Washington. Other trains, filled with boys in blue, were hurrying there as fast as steam could take them.

In the capital of the nation they reported to proper officers, and were assigned to camp, where a rapid organization was going on. Other companies from the same State were there, and they proceeded to get acquainted with each other.

By and by they went into the organization of a regiment, and because he had seen service in Mexico, Captain Coombs was elected major, which of course made Lieutenant Risley captain of the company.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEGRO'S WARNING.

When he was made major of the regiment, Coombs came to Corporal Herbert and said:

"I am almost tempted to refuse it for your sake, corporal."

"Why?"

"Because you will be at the mercy of Captain Risley."

"Don't let that worry you, major," said the young corporal. "I'll be able to take care of myself."

"But you'll be subjected to many insults which you cannot resent. Discipline is very strict in time of war. He will try to provoke you to do something to get you before a court-martial."

"If he does he'll not appear in court against me," said the corporal.

"I know that, and that is why I am uneasy about you."

"Don't worry, major. I have a most perfect control of my temper. I am sorry you were not made colonel of the regiment."

"We have a good man there. I am satisfied as it is."

A week later Captain Risley gave some very peremptory orders to the corporal in reference to the policing of the company camp.

He watched him in the performance of the work, and found fault with him a dozen times. Herbert simply smiled, and worked along as if the business was a picnic to him.

"You are the most incompetent man in the company, Corporal Herbert," he said, in the presence of half the men. "I'll see if I can't have you detailed for such work in future."

"Thanks, captain. The first duty of a soldier is to obey orders."

It was a hard cut, and the captain turned red in the face as he saw the soldiers smile. They understood the meaning of the remark.

He could not make a charge against him for it, as it was a

very proper remark for him to make. But he vowed to punish him on the very first opportunity.

Suddenly the order came for the brigade to which the regiment had been attached to move to the front.

Hurried preparations were made, and the march began on time. It was the first marching the boys had done. It was hard on some of them, but they stood it bravely.

Three days later they heard the sound of cannon, and knew that the foe would not let them go much further without a fight.

That night a negro man came into camp. He was about Corporal Herbert's size, but some two or three years older.

"Is youse a hossifer?" he asked of the corporal.

"Yes, a little one," he replied.

"Waal, den, youse am gwine ter hab trouble in de mo'nin', shuah."

"How so?"

"Kase dem white sogers ober dar on Mill Creek am er comin' fo' youse, an' da's bad 'uns, massa."

Corporal Herbert questioned him closely, and thought his story ought to be known at headquarters.

"Come with me," he said to the negro, and he led the way to the tent of Captain Risley.

There were half a dozen other officers there.

He saluted him and said:

"Captain, here's a man who has news of the enemy, which I think you ought to know about."

"Indeed! Have you issued orders in regard to him and his news?"

"Yes, I ordered him to come here and report to you."

"Well, you may take command of the whole army to-night. Send the nigger away, and don't bring any more of the vagabonds to me."

Herbert saluted and retired, followed by the negro.

He immediately hunted up Major Coombs and told him the negro's story, also his interview with Captain Risley.

The old soldier at once began questioning the negro, and was at once impressed with his story. He took him to the colonel of the regiment, who in turn led him to the brigade headquarters.

The general heard his story, and, to the surprise of Major Coombs, refused to give credence to it.

"It is not reasonable to suppose that a regiment of 500 or 600 horse," said the general, "would attack a brigade of infantry numbering four times as many. The man does not know what he is talking about."

The colonel came away convinced that the general knew what he was talking about, and sent the negro away with the major, who brought him back to the young corporal.

"Corporal," he said, "you and I are the only ones who believe his story. I am afraid we will have trouble before morning."

"So am I, major," said Herbert, "but what can we do?"

"Nothing. We have done our duty."

"Well, I am going to whisper to our boys that if we are attacked to make a break for the foundations of that old house out there."

"Why there, corporal?"

"The foundations are of stone and breast high. It would make a capital little fort against an enemy without artillery."

"Why, yes, so it would. Yes, tell 'em to rush in there if we are attacked."

Herbert went to sixty of the eighty men in the company, and told them that if they were attacked in the night to rush into the old house ruins and fire from behind the stone walls. The other twenty were men whom he did not believe to be friends of his, hence he did not say anything to them about it.

The negro had no friend in the camp, and as Herbert had spoken kindly to him, he said:

"Marsa, lemme stay wid youse an' be youse nigger. I'se a good nigger, sah."

"Well, I am not able to pay you anything, my man," said the corporal.

"I doan' want no pay, marsa," he said. "My ole marsa can't git me heah, an' dat's wha' fo' I'se er gwine ter stay wif youse."

"Well, that's all right. You can sleep on the ground outside my tent, and I'll try to get some rations for you. What's your name?"

"Remus, sah."

"Well, Remus, you may get hurt if the rebels come for us to-morrow."

"Dat's er fac', marsa, but I spec I kin run as fas' as dey kin."

"Oh, you would run, would you?" the corporal asked, laughing.

"Yes, sah. Ef dey seed er nigger heah dey'd shoot 'im dead, sah."

"Why don't you make up your mind to shoot them, too?"

"Er nigger shoot er white man?"

"Why, yes. That's what we are here for. If they come here we'll kill as many of them as we can. If they do come you watch me and stick close to me."

"Yes, sah. I'll do dat."

"Very well. That's my tent over there. My name is Corporal Herbert. You may go and lie down by it if you wish."

The negro did as he was told, and in a little while the boys were commenting on the serenade given them by the "Corporal's moke." His snoring could have been heard two hundred yards away.

But as there was one or more in every mess who played on the same instrument in their sleep, no objections were made to the "music by the black band."

By and by Herbert rolled himself in his blanket. How long he slept he did not know. He was dreaming of the folks at home and of sweet-faced Mary Holmes, when he felt himself grasped by the collar and roughly jerked to his feet.

"Dey am er comin', marsa!" he heard the voice of Remus say.

"Eh! What!"

"Dey am er comin', shuah!" repeated Remus.

Then he heard the pickets firing, and knew that the Confederate cavalry had indeed come as the negro said they would.

"Up, boys!" he cried. "The enemy are on us! To arms! To arms!"

The next moment the long roll was beaten, and the men sprang to their feet. But before they could rally in response to it the rush of cavalry scattered them.

"To the old ruins, boys!" cried Herbert, making a dash for the old stone walls. Others came tumbling in till forty-seven out of the sixty he had spoken to had gathered there.

But not an officer was among them. Major Coombs had been cut off in his efforts to get there. The balance of the regiment and brigade were scattered like leaves before a great wind.

"Steady now, boys!" cried Corporal Herbert. "Let 'em have your lead as fast as you can hand it out to 'em. Now!"

They fired and a dozen saddles were emptied. The moon gave just light enough to enable them to aim. The Confederates were amazed at finding a handful of soldiers at that spot attempting to stop them.

An officer rode up to within ten feet of the stone wall and sung out:

"Surrender or you are lost."

Corporal Herbert raised a rifle and shot him dead.

"That's the way we surrender!" he cried. "Give 'em noth-

ing but lead, boys! They have no cannon! They can't get at us!"

The cavalry now charged all round the stone walls and cut at the heads of the brave boys with their sabres, some using revolvers, too. But Corporal Herbert kept calling out:

"Give 'em lead, boys! Stand for the Union! Down with every rebel!"

The surging mass of horsemen pressed up against the walls like a wave of demons.

"Surrender, you fools!" cried a big, black-bearded officer, aiming his revolver at them.

"Never!" cried Corporal Herbert, giving him a bullet that laid him off his horse.

For more than an hour the fierce contest raged, till half the boys inside the stone walls were down.

Daylight was coming. The gray streaks of dawn found the ruins of the old house a volcano of leaden death.

"Steady, boys!" cried Herbert, the left side of his face covered with blood from a cut on the head. "Stand steady for your country!"

Another officer was so close to the wall when he fell from his saddle that Herbert snatched his sword out of his hand.

Suddenly a volley in the rear of the foe caused them to scatter.

Herbert peered through the gloom of smoke and dawning day and saw the stars and stripes.

Then he sprang upon the wall, and, waving the sword above his head, sung out:

"Victory, boys! Hurrah for the Union!"

The next moment a bullet struck him, and he fell back into the arms of black Remus.

CHAPTER IV.

"FORT CORPORAL HERBERT."

The boys in blue came up with a hurrah and a cheer.

Those inside the four foundation walls of the ruins answered them with another.

All round the four sides the ground was covered with men and horses of the enemy. They were all down. Many were dead, some were dying, and still many more were wounded. It was a ghastly scene to look upon.

Inside the little inclosure many of the brave defenders were also down. Some were never to rise again. Others were wounded, and among the latter was the daring corporal, who had slain five of the enemy with his own hand.

It was not known then that he was even alive.

He was held in the arms of the negro Remus, who received him thus when he fell.

The first man of the reinforcement to mount the wall was Major Coombs.

He surveyed the scene in and around the place, and cried:

"Men of the Dover Guards! You are heroes! You have covered yourselves with glory! I salute you!"

"We never surrender, major!" cried Joe Stebbins, who was wounded in the shoulder. "We stood by the corporal."

"Is the corporal dead?"

"I spec he am, sah," said Remus.

"I hope not!" cried the major, leaping down among the boys. "Were you here all the time, my man?"

"Yes, sah. I nebber leab de sojers, sah!"

"You are a brave man. Poor Herbert! He was as brave a patriot as ever breathed or died. Lay him down. I could have died in his stead."

The negro gently laid him on the ground, his head resting on the thigh of a dead comrade.

The movement brought a groan from him.

"Hi—hi, marsa! He ain't dead yet! Marsa, he ain't dead!" and Remus sprang up and glared around at the others.

Major Coombs knelt down by the unconscious corporal and laid a hand on his heart. Then he laid his right ear over against the left breast.

"He lives!" he said. "Here, boys, lift the hero out of this! Lay him out there on the grass! Where is Captain Risley? Is he dead, too?"

"He wasn't with us, major," said one of the boys.

"Where are the lieutenants, then?" and he looked around him.

"Never saw any of them after the alarm was sounded."

"Did Corporal Herbert command you in this fight?"

"Yes, and like a hero, too."

They lifted him out of the inclosure and laid him tenderly on the grass among the dead and wounded of the enemy.

An old grizzled Confederate soldier alongside of him looked hard at him for a minute or so, saying:

"We are foes to the death, but that youth has the stuff in him that heroes are made of. We found that place there full of heroes. I am dying. He gave me my death wound. He was a brave soldier."

Major Coombs grasped the hand of the dying man in gray, and said:

"We are not enemies now. You fought bravely, too. I am sorry you are hurt."

"Thank you. Give me a drink of water—water!"

Someone gave him some from a canteen. He swallowed it with difficulty and gasped:

"Thanks—I—I—" and a gurgling sound in his throat cut short what he was trying to say. He never spoke again.

The general rode up with his staff and saw what had been done. He was amazed at the heroic defense that had been made by less than half a hundred men.

"Who commands here, Major Coombs?" he asked.

"Corporal Herbert, of the Dover Guards," was the reply, "and I fear it is all over with him."

"I am sorry to hear that. Where are the officers of the company?"

"They have not turned up yet."

The general sprang from the saddle and knelt by the side of the corporal.

"He lives yet," he said.

"Yes, barely lives."

"While there is life there is hope. Send the surgeon here at once. Such a hero should have precedence."

Then, rising to his feet, he again gazed around at the heaps of dead men and horses of the enemy.

"Men, soldiers!" he cried, "they were heroes who held this fort. We'll call it 'Fort Corporal Herbert,' and may the memory of this scene make heroes of us all."

The surgeon came up and after examining Corporal Herbert, said:

"He has three wounds. He is unconscious only from concussion of the brain. He's not dangerously hurt."

"Thankee de Lor' fo' dat!" ejaculated black Remus.

"Where does that negro belong?" the general asked.

"He is the one I brought to your quarters last night," said the major.

The general flushed up in the face as his eyes met those of the major's.

"His story was true, then?"

"It would seem so," the major dryly replied.

The major said no more.

He was too good a soldier to make any comment on the acts of his superior officer.

The general had a stern, hard look in his eyes. He was blaming his own stupidity in a merciless, though silent way.

The wounded were taken care of, and Herbert received special attention. In a couple of hours he recovered from the effects of the concussion of the brain, and looked around him.

"We whipped 'em, major," he said to the old soldier by his side.

"Yes, so you did, my boy, and all the glory and honor is yours."

"No, no, major," he said. "The boys stood by me like heroes and fought as hard as I did. They fell all around me. Oh, there will be sad hearts in Dover to-night."

"Yes, so there will; but all hearts will be proud of their brave fight. The doctor says your wounds are not dangerous, though painful."

"I am glad to hear that. They are painful enough. Where is my nigger?"

"He is with the boys."

"I saw him kill a rebel with the barrel of a gun. Keep him for me, major."

"I will. I'll look out for him."

It was near noon before the entire regiment got together again. It had been badly scattered by the charge of the enemy. The surprise had been so complete that some of the officers didn't show up till the next day.

Captain Risley did not go so far.

He came back bareheaded and in a bad plight. When the boys told him that the Dover Guards had won the honors of the day he was dumfounded.

The colonel of the regiment told him that the corporal had saved the brigade from utter rout, and that the general would recommend him to the President for promotion.

He turned pale as a sheet and said:

"I can't understand how they got there. They did not rally at the standard when the long-roll was sounded, and so I retreated with the others."

"You were unfortunate," said the colonel. "Your corporal won all the honors."

"Well, I am glad my company acquitted itself so nobly."

"Yes, they are brave men. I hear that at least one-third of them has fallen."

"It was awful. It will be the grief of my life that I was separated from them in the darkness."

He went to look at "Fort Corporal Herbert."

He saw the evidences of the terrible death struggle all round the blackened stone walls.

He heard soldiers all round him praising the heroes who defended the little fort.

"They didn't need any officers," he heard an old soldier remark.

He visited the wounded men and spoke kindly to them—called them heroes.

But he did not go to see the corporal.

He could not face him after what had happened, but he hated him more than ever.

Lieutenant Joslyn called on him and said:

"I am sorry you did not let me know you were going into that little fort, corporal."

"I was afraid you would forbid it, lieutenant," he replied. "I never disobey orders."

"You arranged with the boys to go there before the attack was made?" the lieutenant asked.

"We agreed among ourselves that if we were attacked in the night, as we feared we might be, to get into that place and hold it against the enemy."

"Did you have any idea that you were going to be attacked?"

"Yes," and he told about the story brought by Remus.

"Ah! You did wrong not to tell the captain that!"

"I took him to the captain, and he sent me away in a very curt manner."

"Ah!"

"Yes, and then I told the boys that the ruins would be a good refuge in case we needed one."

Lieutenant Joslyn was a personal friend of the captain's. He was as much mortified over the situation as Risley himself was.

He went to the captain and told him that Corporal Herbert had been guilty of insubordination in telling the boys, before the attack was made, to make for the old ruins if the enemy appeared.

"Did he do that?"

"Yes."

"How know you that?"

"I heard some of the boys say so, and he confessed it to me."

"Ah! he is guilty, then!"

CHAPTER V.

THE TWO NURSES.

When the news reached Dover that the Dover Guards had been cut to pieces, and that the brave young corporal who had saved the day for the army was wounded, the whole town was thrown into the most intense excitement.

As on the eventful evening when the news of the battle of Bull Run came, Judge Holmes stood on the steps of the post-office and read the dispatches to the people.

Nearly a score of the brave boys had fallen—killed and wounded—and there were many sad hearts in Dover that night.

At last a dispatch came from Major Coombs to the judge himself.

"When the regiment was scattered by the thundering charge of the enemy's cavalry," it said, "Corporal Herbert and about half the members of the Dover Guards took refuge inside the foundation walls of a house that had been burned down. It was a miniature stone fort. They held it against the combined assaults of five hundred Confederates for nearly two hours, killing and wounding at least one hundred of them. Corporal Herbert is said to have slain five with his own hand, and fell himself just as the enemy fled, receiving three wounds. The Guards suffered terribly, but never flinched. They lost about twenty killed and wounded."

It was terrible and at the same time glorious news. Even those whose hearts were filled with a horrible suspense as to the fate of loved ones throbbed with pride over the valor of the boys who had gone to the front to defend the old flag.

Winnie Herbert was in the crowd with her mother when she heard that her hero brother was wounded.

"Oh, let me go to him!" she cried. "Let me go to him! Let me go and nurse him!"

"Alas, my child!" sobbed her mother. "We haven't the money! Oh, my poor brave boy!" and she wrung her hands in an agony of grief.

"You shall have the money, lass," said a rough-looking old workingman near by. "Here's one dollar! Here, men! Come down with your dollars to pay his sister's fare to the hospital."

It struck home to the heart of everyone. Men rushed up to Winnie and her mother and thrust money into their hands till they could not stow it away. One man suggested a basket—another a bag.

Mary Holmes made a bag out of a handkerchief, and it was soon filled.

"Winnie, ask father to let me go with you," suggested Mary. "Oh, I want to go and help nurse our brave boys."

Winnie wanted the rich girl to go with her. Somehow the two had taken to each other since the guards went away. Mary was always asking Winnie what Will had written, and she often read his letters to her.

"Oh, if you would only go," she said. "I'll go down on my knees to him," and she rushed up to the judge and said:

"Judge Holmes, let Mary go with me. She wants to go, and she is the one friend I would prefer next to my mother."

The judge was staggered.

He loved his beautiful daughter with an idolatrous love, and the idea of letting her go to the battlefield as a nurse quite unnerved him.

But that was a moment when no man could refuse a boon to the brave defenders of the Union.

"Let me go, father," said Mary. "It is my duty to go."

It was a hard thing for him to do, but he bowed his head in silent assent, and the two girls hastened home to prepare for the journey on the first train the next morning.

When Winnie and her mother got home they found that several hundred dollars had been given them—at least ten times more than the expenses of the trip would amount to.

Neighbors came in to assist in getting Winnie ready, and it was long past midnight ere the task was done.

At an early hour the next morning Judge Holmes' carriage drove up before the little cottage home of the Widow Herbert, and Winnie hurriedly gave her mother a good-by kiss and entered it.

Ten minutes later she and Mary Holmes were whirling through the country on their way to Washington.

It was on the third day after the battle that Captain Risley was returning from the headquarters of the general, whither he had been to lay before him a statement to the effect that Corporal Herbert had been guilty of planning concerted action with the members of Co. D, in case of attack by the enemy, without the knowledge of the said officers or regiment.

It was a serious charge under ordinary circumstances, and ordinarily it would have wrought ruin to the corporal.

But the general himself had good reasons for not wishing to have the charge pressed, as in that case the fact would come out that he had refused to entertain the warning brought him by the negro Remus.

"Captain Risley," he said, sternly, "I understand that the corporal himself brought that negro to your tent and told you that he had information which you ought to look into."

"Yes, general, but I—"

"And you gruffly turned him away," continued the general, "without looking into the matter. Is it true?"

"I didn't think it my duty to do so, general."

"It was your duty to see whether it was news which ought to go up to your superior officers. That is a more serious charge against you than the one you have made against Corporal Herbert. Events have justified him, whereas the blame of the disaster could be thrown entirely on your shoulders. A court-martial would have you dismissed from the service, if not shot. You had better drop your charge against the corporal, for he has the army and the whole country at his back just now."

Captain Risley came away in a very much disturbed condition of mind.

"It is a narrow escape for me," he muttered to himself as he walked back toward his own quarters. "I wonder if he will prefer charges against me when he recovers? Confound him, he has won a name that I'd give ten thousand dollars to have! What a terrible fight he made! I don't know what I

should have done if I had been there. I'm afraid I would have surrendered. It looked like total destruction to refuse, with five hundred terrible cut-throats around you. I am—"

"Oh, Captain Risley!" cried a sweet, girlish voice behind him, and looking around he was amazed at seeing Mary Holmes running toward him.

"Why, Miss Holmes!" he exclaimed. "I am surprised at seeing you in camp! When did you get here?"

"I came a few moments ago with Winnie Herbert," replied the belle. "She has come to nurse her brother. Do please show us to where he is?"

"Why, certainly. He is in the field hospital. Whom did you come to nurse?"

"I came to help nurse all our boys," she replied.

"I am sorry I was not fortunate enough to be one of the wounded," he said.

"It was a great misfortune that you were not, for the people at home think you ran away and left the corporal and the men to fight it out with the enemy."

"My God!" he groaned. "Do they think that meanly of me? Did all the other officers of the regiment run away, too? Not one of them was in the fight."

"I don't know anything about it other than what I have said," she replied. "The people are excited, and they don't talk or even think of anybody but Corporal Herbert."

"Well, I am sorry they think so meanly of me. I don't deserve it, unless every other officer in the regiment does, too."

"Corporal Herbert will be promoted, will he not?" she asked.

"I am sure I don't know."

"You are his captain. You surely will recommend him for promotion?"

He was silent, for the question placed him in a position he did not at all desire. Suddenly he saw Winnie Herbert coming toward him leaning on the arm of Major Coombs.

He was silent, for the question placed him in a position he did not at all desire. Suddenly he saw Winnie Herbert coming toward him leaning on the arm of Major Coombs.

He lifted his hat to her, and they all four entered the hospital tent together. Winnie rushed to the cot where her brother lay, threw her arms about his neck, and kissed him with a devoted sister's impulse.

Then Mary Holmes grasped his hand and said:

"I am so glad it is no worse with you. We have come to nurse you and the other brave boys back to life and health."

"Well, with two such nurses I don't think I will get well in a hurry," he replied.

"Indeed you will," she said, "for I won't let any one play off sick on me!" and she laughed and shook her head like a determined young matron.

Then she turned and joined Captain Risley at the bedside of another of the guards, and went with him to all the others, quieting each one with a sweet smile and a clasp of the hand. She spoke of the pride of the people at home over the fame they had won, each mentioning the name of Herbert as the hero of the hour.

Captain Risley turned away and muttered:

"Why didn't he die when he fell?"

CHAPTER VI.

A PRISONER OF WAR.

When the two girls had been in camp a week, nearly every unmarried man in the regiment was in love with them. Their presence seemed to make every one of them eager to do some daring deed in order to attract their attention.

But they were unremitting in their attention to the wounded, though the officers tried hard to draw them away for more pleasant occupation.

Suddenly the camp was thrown into the wildest commotion.

The enemy had made a move that forced the sudden departure of the brigade without a moment's delay.

Captain Risley rushed up to the field hospital and grasped Mary Holmes by the arm, saying:

"Come away! The army is moving. You must go with us or fall into the hands of the enemy."

She turned pale, looked hard at him for a moment or two, and then asked:

"But what about these wounded men?"

"They will be left in charge of a surgeon. Come quick. The order to march has been given. The Dover Guards will give you protection."

"I won't go and leave these men behind," she replied firmly.

"But you will fall into the hands of the enemy!"

"I am not afraid. They will do me no harm. I am not a combatant."

"Oh, Mary!" cried Winnie Herbert, running up to her and throwing her arms around her neck, "they are going to leave the wounded men behind."

"Yes," said Mary. "They were left behind when they fought so bravely for their lives and the old flag. I am going to stay with them, Winnie."

"So am I. Oh, I'd die before I would leave them. I am not a coward if the men are!"

"You don't understand the exigencies of the hour, Miss Herbert," said Captain Risley. "We have to move in obedience to the orders of the general. A great battle is about to be fought and—"

"I know that nothing could induce me to leave these poor wounded men behind if I were a general," retorted Winnie. "I'll show them a woman is not afraid of all the rebels in the world."

"Come, come, Miss Mary!" pleaded Captain Risley, pulling at her arm. "Why should you fall into their hands? You have no brother here. I admire her devotion to her brother, but it is different with you."

"Indeed it is not. Every one of these wounded men is my brother, and I am going to stand by them. Run along now or the enemy may see you."

The young captain flushed up in the face and said:

"You are unjust, Miss Mary. A soldier must obey orders. I am sorry you will remain behind and hope no harm may befall you," and kissing her hand he turned away and joined his regiment, which was already on the move.

The surgeon came in and said:

"I am afraid you are making a mistake, young ladies. You may be subjected to many privations, if not actual indignities."

"We will not desert these men, doctor," said Mary, with a determined emphasis.

"Ah! You would both make brave soldiers!"

"I hope we would," said Winnie.

They went to Corporal Herbert's bedside, and he said to them:

"Go! Go and leave us to our fate!"

"Never! Never!" they both exclaimed.

Hark!

They all held their breaths and listened.

"They are coming," said the corporal.

It was the rush of cavalry.

"Yes," said the doctor. "They will soon be here. I would advise you ladies to sit quietly by this cot here and wait till you are spoken to by the officers."

In a few moments more the roar of a thousand cavalry

sweeping by in pursuit of the Union troops was quite deafening.

The main body went onward past the hospital tent.

But a young captain halted his company in front of the tent, and came in.

The two girls turned and gazed at him.

He was tall, handsome, and distinguished-looking.

The moment he saw them he removed his hat and bowed.

Then he turned to the surgeon in charge, and asked:

"How many wounded are here?"

"Twenty-eight, and all of the — regiment of New York," replied the doctor.

"Those ladies—are they nurses?"

"Yes."

"Tell them not to be alarmed, as I will place a guard around the tent for its protection. Are you the surgeon in charge?"

"Yes."

"Well, remain in charge until further orders," and then, hat in hand, he passed through to look at the wounded men on their cots.

The two girls rose to their feet and stood as he stopped at the foot of the cot on which the wounded corporal lay.

Their faces were pallid with both fear and anxiety.

"He is my brother, sir," said Winnie, who felt that she must say something.

"You are right to stay with him," he said. "I have two sisters myself, and I love them as your brother no doubt loves you. Rest perfectly easy in mind. You will find that we are not making war on your sex."

"Oh, thank you ever so much!" exclaimed Winnie, the color coming back into her face again. "You don't know what a load you have taken off our hearts."

"Then I am glad I spoke. Are you much hurt, sir?" and he turned to Herbert as he asked the question.

"Pretty badly hurt—three wounds," was the reply.

"Well, you have been in a pretty hot fight, I should say."

"Yes, and it was my first one, too. Rather bad luck, I think."

"Yes. Where was it?"

"In the ruins of an old house during the night attack made by your people last week."

"Oh you were in that pen, were you? I was there on the outside of it. You were in a hot place and no mistake."

"Yes, I thought it was very hot at the time."

"So did we. Why, you were like a nest of hornets. We lost heavily there. Some of our best men fell. Who had command in that pen?"

"I did, sir."

"Indeed! You are a brave fellow! Give me your hand!" and he extended his hand to Herbert, who grasped it heartily. "What rank do you hold in the army?"

"Only a corporal, sir."

"Only a corporal!" and the young Confederate officer gazed hard at him. "Well, if we don't kill you in the next battle, we'll hear of you higher up in the ranks. You have the stuff for a general in you! Give me your hand again. My name is St. Clair—captain in the Black Horse cavalry of Virginia. I'd like to meet you again some day. What is your name?"

"Will Herbert, of the Dover Guards, of the — New York regiment," said the corporal.

"I hope you may recover and win a higher rank, corporal. I congratulate you on having a loving sister to nurse you through," and then bowing to the two girls again he passed on through the tent.

"Oh, what a pity such a gentleman is a rebel!" said Mary as she gazed after him.

"Yes," assented Winnie. "I am glad to have fallen to his charge."

"Yes, he is a gentleman," said the corporal. "Because they are our enemies it is no reason to suppose them less gentlemanly than our own people. Yet I am sorry I am a prisoner."

"So am I. Oh, I know mother will grieve herself sick over this."

"Well, it cannot be helped. Don't make yourself sick worrying over it."

The captain gave orders to the guard which he placed around the tent to let no one enter there save officers of the Confederate army.

Then he went away, and bodies of the enemy kept passing all day long.

Along in the afternoon the surgeon in charge said to Mary Holmes:

"I'll be searched and disarmed in a little while. I have a very fine revolver, pocket size, that I would not like to lose. Will you take charge of it for me?"

"Yes, with pleasure. But won't they search us also?"

"No, I think not."

He gave her the weapon, which she placed in the bosom of her dress.

In the evening a brigade encamped around the hospital tent, and the general commanding came in to see the surgeon. When he went away a captain took command there who ordered men around in a brutal sort of way.

"You women can't stay here," he said to Winnie. "This is no place for you."

"I am nursing my brother," said she, "and if I am willing to put up with the hardships and discomforts, I am sure you should not object."

"But I do object," he replied, "and you had better prepare to be sent back across the lines. There is a private residence out there where you can stay till we are ready to send you away. Put on your things and go with the guard."

"You are a brute, sir!" said Winnie.

"I dare say you think so, but that doesn't make it."

"I am going to see the general about this," said Mary Holmes. "I don't believe he will permit such brutality among small officers," and she put on her hat and started to leave the hospital.

The captain sprang up and caught her by the arm, hissing in her face as he did so:

"Don't force me to use force and put you under guard!"

"Unhand me, you ruffian!" she cried, making a sudden effort to shake off his grasp on her arm.

He caught her other arm, and was trying to hold her, when she uttered a scream.

Corporal Herbert sprang from his cot and staggered forward to assist her.

But the next moment he heard the keen, whip-like crack of a revolver, and the Confederate captain staggered backward, uttering an expression of astonishment as he did so.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BRUTAL CAPTAIN.

On hearing the shot Corporal Herbert stopped and glared at the couple.

He wondered if the brutal young officer had shot her.

But he saw the next moment Mary Holmes standing upright like a Diana, a smoking pistol in her hands, and a pair of blazing, flashing eyes in her head.

She had shot him with the little weapon the surgeon had confided to her but a few hours before.

"Oh, Mary, what have you done?" cried Winnie, almost paralyzed with horror.

"I shot him," said Mary, "and if he lays hands on me again I'll kill him!"

The officer glared at her in silence for a moment or two, and then staggered out of the tent.

"Brother, brother!" cried Winnie, on discovering that he had left his cot. "Go back to bed or you may get worse!" and she forced him back to the cot he had just left.

"Mary Holmes," he called out to Mary, "come here and give me your hand. What a brave girl you are!"

Mary came forward and put her hand in his.

"I tried to go to your assistance," he said. "I am glad you shot him! He is a brute!"

"I—I didn't know hardly what I was doing," she said.

"You did just what a brave girl and true woman should have done!" he said. "I hope it will get to the general's ears, for I don't believe he would sanction his conduct in the least particular."

A file of soldiers came in, and the sergeant in command said:

"You two ladies are to go with us."

"You can do naught but obey," said Corporal Herbert.

Captain St. Clair came in at the other end of the tent at that moment.

Winnie ran to him, crying out:

"Oh, sir, save us! save us!"

"Why, you are in no danger," he replied. "You are safe here."

"Indeed we are not. They have sent a file of soldiers to take us away."

"I can't understand that," he said. "I'll inquire about it," and he went to the sergeant and asked him why the women were to be taken away.

The sergeant didn't know, but he had received orders from Captain Boland to take them to the farmhouse a half mile away and leave them there.

"Who gave the captain the order?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Well, I have no right to countermand the order, but I will go and see him myself. Delay action a few minutes and send one of your men with me to your captain's quarters."

It was done, and the two girls waited in a horrible suspense till he came back.

"You can remain," he said, turning to the two girls. "Sergeant, you can return to your command. Captain Boland will let them remain until he can consult the general about the matter."

"Oh, thank you ever so much!" cried both girls at once.

"Which one of you shot the captain?" St. Clair asked, looking from one to the other.

"It was me, captain," said Mary.

"How did it happen?"

She told him all.

"You did right. I shall lay the case before the general myself. It may result seriously for him."

"Is he so badly hurt as that?"

"Oh, he won't die from the wound, though he has your bullet in his shoulder. But the general is a very courteous disciplinarian, and the captain's conduct will greatly shock him."

"Oh, I am so glad he is not going to die?" said Mary, bursting into tears.

The tension on her nerves was too great for her, and she had to cry.

"Tears will do you good," said Captain St. Clair. "I am sorry you have been subjected to such annoyance. But it is inseparable from a state of war."

"No apology is necessary from you, captain," said Winnie. "We owe you a debt of gratitude which we can never repay."

"Indeed, you should not feel that way."

"We can't help it."

"I hope that you think a man can be a good soldier and a gentleman at the same time."

"Oh, yes, of course. My brother is one, and you have shown us that you are, too."

He promised to call again in the early morning, and see that they were not molested, after which he took leave of them and left the hospital.

When he came back in the morning he told them that the movements of the army required the regiment to which Captain Boland belonged to move on that very morning.

"But the captain's wound forces him to remain behind," he added, "and he has been sent to the farmhouse where he wished to send you last night."

"That looks a little like poetic justice," remarked Corporal Herbert.

"Yes, with all the poetry left out," assented the captain. "Well, I may not have the pleasure of meeting you again," said the captain, turning to Winnie. "My command is ordered forward at once, and that means trouble for somebody. You are both inside our lines, where you have but few friends. Promise me that if you get into any trouble you will let me know it. You can always find out where my command is."

"I will make you that promise with pleasure," said Mary. "And so will I," put in Winnie.

"And I thank you from the bottom of my heart," said Corporal Herbert.

He shook hands with them all, and left to rejoin his command.

"I am sorry he is gone," said the corporal.

"So am I. There can't be many like him in the Southern army, I am sure," said Winnie.

"There is where you are mistaken," returned her brother. "There are many like him, and I hope we have some like him in our army."

"Ha! Did you hear that?"

"Yes! What was it?"

"The boom of a cannon. It may be the opening gun of a great battle, and I am here unable to take part in it."

"You have done your share for the present, brother," said his sister. "Keep quiet, and don't get excited. I hope our army may win!"

"Of course! Of course! Oh, if I were only with our brave boys to-day!"

"But you cannot be. Don't excite yourself. There goes another cannon. Oh, brave men are being killed to-day. How far away is it, do you think?"

"Some fifteen or twenty miles," he said, as he listened to the fast increasing roar of artillery.

"So far as that?"

"Yes, fully that far, I guess."

"We won't be in any danger here, then?"

"No, not unless our people win and follow them back here, when you may have trouble. A retreating army has but little consideration for anything or anybody. Ah! The battle is growing hot! Hear the big guns! It's music, isn't it, boys?"

"Yes!" cried several of the wounded ones. "Hurrah for the Union!"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ESCAPE OF THE CORPORAL.

The battle raged fiercely all day, and the wounded Union boys lay in the hospital tent and listened.

The tide of battle rose and fell, and the hopes of the brave fellows rose and fell with it.

When the sounds grew louder they almost sprang from their cots in eager joy, for it indicated that the Union army was pushing the enemy back.

"Boys, our comrades are winning!" cried one poor fellow, almost too weak to raise his voice above a whisper.

"Yes," said the corporal. "They are pushing them back on us. Let 'em come! Let 'em come! Let 'em run over and crush us, if only the old flag floats in triumph over the field!"

"Yes, yes. Hurrah!"

Winnie and Mary caught the spirit of the moment, and joined their voices in the glad shout of triumph.

By and by the sounds receded after a most terrific roar. Then they grew fainter and the faces on the cots became paler and hopeless.

The battle was going against the Union, and the sad hearts gave way to despair.

"Oh, why cannot the right win the day!" sobbed Mary Holmes. "Our boys are as brave as the bravest!"

"They are a brave people, too," the corporal said, "and they have the best officers in the world to lead them. The right will win yet. It is bound to win."

The day closed, and darkness came on. It was a very dark night, and as it dragged its slow length along, its hours seemed like days to those who lay there in that field hospital, waiting for the news.

It was about daylight when one of the guards who had been left in charge of the hospital put his head into the door and sang out:

"Say, Yanks, you 'uns is beat!"

"Thank you for the news, anyway," said the surgeon, on whom the suspense was wearing hard.

"We'll try it again," said one of the wounded men on the cot nearest the door.

"No use, Yank," and the Confederate laughed as he backed out of the door.

"Keep quiet there," said the surgeon. "Don't say anything more this morning. Try to get all the sleep you can."

The sounds of battle had died away altogether, and all was quiet again around the hospital.

A little after sunrise the news came that a great battle had been fought, and that the Union army had been forced back.

The exultant enemy had followed, and that left peace and quiet in and around the section where our hero was a wounded prisoner.

They heard reinforcements going forward to swell the ranks of the Confederate army, but they knew that the patriots of the North were hurrying forward too, and that ere long the battle would turn and then the crash would come.

Days and nights came and went, and Corporal Herbert's wounds healed so rapidly that he became alarmed.

"Why don't you want to get well?" Mary Holmes asked.

"Because I will be sent to prison with the others, and you will have no sick one on this cot to look after."

"Oh, will they take you away?" his sister asked in alarm.

"Yes, of course. They don't keep their prisoners in such places as this."

"Oh, mercy!" groaned Winnie. "What will I do if they take you away from me?"

"You'll have to apply for permission to go back home."

That was a situation she had not counted on, and both of them felt that they were on the eve of being thrown on their own resources in the enemy's country.

"I say, brother," whispered Winnie, "you must not get well too soon. The Union army will drive 'em back soon, and then we'd be in our own lines, and under the old flag once more."

"You can't fool a doctor," said the corporal, laughing. "When he comes in and feels my pulse, examines my wounds

and looks at my tongue he'll tell the guard to march me off to the prison pen."

"Oh, you are not half well enough yet? He would not be so cruel!"

"I am not so sure of that. I wish I could make my escape from here."

"Are you strong enough for that?"

"I think I am. If the doctor comes and finds me here as well as I am I'll have to go."

"Then make your escape if you can," whispered Mary Holmes. "Tell me how I can aid you."

He looked up at her in silence for a moment or two, and said:

"I won't involve you two in trouble. But I'll get away if I can, so as not to cause any suspicion to rest on you and my sister. Don't worry if you miss me some morning."

"But I will aid you in some way. Tell me how?"

"Well, you might get into a habit of talking with the guards so as to distract their attention. It might save me from getting a bullet in the back."

"I'd do it if I got the bullet myself," she said, and in a few minutes she strolled over to the door of the tent and began asking the guard there some questions in such a sweet tone of voice that he was charmed by the Yankee girl.

Winnie did the same thing at the other end, and they kept it up two days, by which time they were quite well acquainted with all of the guards. The latter were good-natured fellows who had always been deferential to the sex, and in this instance they did not forget their good manners.

At last the time came for him to make the effort to get away. A dark, stormy night came on.

The two girls engaged the guards in conversation. He watched his chances. Dropping out of his cot he put on his shoes, trousers, coat and hat, while lying on the floor. Then, when dressed, he crawled out under the tent and slipped away in the darkness of the night.

The other guards were strangely remiss that evening. They did not believe that any of the wounded were able to escape, however they may have desired to do so.

When Winnie saw that he had slipped out she trembled like a leaf in the wind. She expected every moment to hear a gun shot.

Bang!

Both girls gave a scream, fell into each other's arms, and burst into an uncontrollable fit of weeping.

They believed he had been shot by one of the sentries, and every moment expected to see him brought in dead or dying.

The guards rushed to the spot to find out the cause of the shot.

"I halted a man," said the sentry who fired, "and as he did not respond I fired at him. I don't know whether I hit him or not."

The officer of the guard called for lights; they were brought, and a search was made.

Nothing was found, and the officer doubted that the sentry had seen anybody.

"I am sure that I did, captain," said the soldier.

"It is too dark for you to see a man unless he were very close to you."

"Still I saw him," persisted the sentry.

"I've no doubt you think so," said the officer, "but I think you were mistaken. You should be more careful in the future," and he went back to his quarters, growling over the fact that an interesting game of cards had been needlessly interrupted.

An hour later the corporal of the guard went through the hospital and made the discovery that one of the cots were empty.

He gave the alarm at once, and then the escape became known.

The officer of the guard was furious with rage, for he would be held responsible. He demanded of the Union surgeon to know if he had any knowledge of the escape.

"Not in the least," he said.

"I don't believe you."

"That is your fault, not mine," was the reply of the doctor.

"I'll order you and the two women under arrest."

"Very well. You can have us shot if you wish. We are in your power."

CHAPTER IX.

THE FLIGHT AND STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM.

The shot fired by the sentry came near making an end of Corporal Herbert.

The bullet grazed his breast, cutting his coat and shirt badly, and raising a blister on his fleshy part of the left breast.

He darted away in the darkness, knowing that pursuit was impossible before daylight.

"Now for the Union lines," he said, as he made his way northward.

"I am in the rear of the enemy, and may run into some of their camps at any minute. I'll go as far as I can to-night, and hide during the daytime. Whew! how it pours!"

The rain came down in torrents a half hour after his escape from the hospital, and the darkness became very intense. Several times he stumbled and fell, bruising himself in many places.

It was along about three o'clock in the morning when he was passing a farmhouse. He heard several dogs bark furiously, and the next moment they came over the fence after him.

"My God!" he gasped. "I am unarmed! I can't even find a stone with which to defend myself! Off! Begone, sir!"

Three of them sprang at him like hungry wolves. Two buried their teeth in his legs.

The third one he seized by the ears, and swung him like a club above his head, bringing him down on one of the others with such force as to almost kill both.

The other released his hold and stood at bay, the two lying helpless on the ground uttering cries of pain.

"Hi, dar! Who dat er hittin' dem dogs!" cried a negro, coming out to the fence.

"Call 'em off or I'll kill 'em!" said the corporal.

"Heah, Mose! You, Tige! Come heah, Buck!" and the negro came over the fence to call off the dogs. "Did dey bite youse, Marsa?"

"Yes—two of them did," said the corporal, determined to play on the negro's sympathies.

"I'se mighty sorry, marsa," said the negro. "Dem ar dogs am de wustus' dogs I ebber did see. Dat fool nigger Remus done gone an' lef' 'em, an' dey's mad all de time. I neber see sich dogs."

"Remus! Did you say Remus?"

"Yes, sah! He done gone an' run'd erway, an' de dogs ain't neber bin good sense den, sah."

"Who is Remus?"

"He am my son, sah!"

"Do you know where he is?"

"No, sah—I doan't fo' er fac'."

"Well, I do."

"Eh! Youse know dat?"

"Yes; he is with the Yankee army."

"Eh! T'ank de good Lor'! Afo' God, marsa, I done fo'got wha' I say!"

"Yes. He was with me. I am a Yankee soldier, trying to get back to my people. Remus is a young man about my own size, very black, and has had the end of his little finger cut off—so you know that I am telling you the truth."

"Yes, sah! Bress de Lor'!" and the old negro's emotion was evinced by the tremor of his voice.

"Well, help me to hide from the soldiers till to-morrow night, and I'll see that good shall come to you some day."

"Yes, sah! I'll do dat, sah. I'se er gwine ter kill dem dogs, shuah."

"Never mind the dogs. They did what dogs believe they are kept for. Show me to some good hiding-place, and that is all I want."

The old negro took him by the hand and led him inside the yard, and round to the third cabin in the rear of the house.

There he opened the door and groped his way inside.

Herbert heard whisperings in the further end, and knew that the old darky was confering with his wife.

In a few minutes the old man was leading him by the hand into the dark recesses of the cabin till they struck a ladder.

"Go on dar, marsa," whispered the old man, "an' Calline 'll bring youse er quilt an' er piller."

"Give me some water, please."

"Yes, sah," and in a few moments an old-fashioned Virginia gourd was placed in his hands. He drank his fill, and then crawled upstairs, or rather, up the little ladder to the little loft under the roof of the cabin.

There he laid down in his wet clothes, glad to find even such a shelter. He was suffering no end of pain from the wounds made by the dogs. But he did not complain. He knew it would be of no use.

In a little while the old man brought up a quilt and a pillow for his use. These he used for a bed, and in a little while was soundly sleeping.

When he awoke it was near noon time. The old negro had crawled up in the loft and brought him some food. His wife had also made a decoction of herbs with which to bathe his dog-teeth wounds.

The decoction when applied to the sores came near making him go mad with pain; but in five minutes he was easy again. All the soreness was gone.

During the day a squadron of Confederate cavalry came by and halted at the gate.

Two soldiers came into the cabin to inquire for the overseer, who was absent at the time.

They went away, and an hour later a detachment of the famous Black Horse Cavalry came by.

He heard one of the negroes say that Marse Cap'en St. Clair's company was er going by, and he was almost tempted to write a note and send it to the gallant officer, asking his protection for Mary Holmes and Winnie, whom he had left behind in the hospital.

But the cavalry passed on and the chance went with it.

The day waned, and the stars came out again. Old Ned, Remus' father, put up a roasted chicken for him, and started out with him to pilot the way to the cabin of a negro preacher eight miles away. He said that the preacher would do the rest for him.

They started out, Old Ned in the lead, and, following a cattle path, had gone several miles through the woods, when they were suddenly halted.

"De Lor' sabe us," gasped Old Ned, coming to a halt.

Quick as a flash Herbert glided off to the left, knowing that the negro would hold the attention of the sentry.

When at a safe distance in the darkness he stopped and listened.

"Who are you?" he heard the sentry ask.

"I'se er nigger, marsa," replied Old Ned, in trembling tones.

"Yer are, eh?"

"Yes, sah."

"Well, where are yer gwine at this time o' night?"

"I'se gwine ober ter see Brer Jones, sah."

"Gwine ter see Brer Jones, eh? Waal, come along with me, an' I'll show you Brer Smith," and he heard them moving away through the bushes.

He followed and soon came in sight of a little camp-fire in a hollow, around which sat a score of Confederate soldiers.

He saw the old negro in their midst by the light of the camp-fire, and heard them questioning him as to where he was going. The old darky, though very much frightened, kept his secret like a first-class freemason.

He was listening to catch 'every word that was uttered, when he was startled by feeling a heavy and strong hand on his shoulder, and heard:

"Move and you die!"

CHAPTER X.

THE NIGHT IN THE WOODS.

The sudden attack was so entirely unexpected that, for a moment or two the corporal was taken completely unawares.

He could not tell in the darkness whether his assailant was a soldier or not. But he had no time to make any explanations.

To once more fall into the hands of the enemy was not to be thought of, so he determined to free himself or die in the attempt.

He wheeled on his assailant, and clenched with him.

The unknown was a powerful man in physique.

The corporal was weakened from his recent wounds and the privations he had endured during the last four and twenty hours.

He almost groaned in despair when the truth flashed through his mind that he was being overpowered.

Suddenly his hand came in contact with his assailant's revolver, which was still in his belt.

He drew it, cocked and fired it with one hand, and the man gave a groan and sank to the ground.

The shot caused those at the campfire to rush toward the spot.

But the corporal had gone deeper into the woods and kept out of their way.

He had no idea of becoming a prisoner again if he could help it.

"They've got the old negro," he said to himself, as he made his way through the bushes. "I'll have to do the best I can without him. But it is so dark in these woods that I can't tell which way I am going. I may be going in the direction of Richmond, for all I know. But as long as I am free I am all right."

He had lost the rations which the old negro's wife had put up for him. But he felt that the revolver with only one chamber empty was more than a fair exchange for him.

In the dense woods he could see no light in any direction by which he could be guided, yet he knew that if he kept going in one direction he would strike a road or a farm, for he was not in an unsettled part of the world.

Acting on that idea, he pushed his way through the bushes for two hours till he struck a fence and an open space beyond it.

It was a field.

He climbed the fence and walked a little distance so as to be out of the shadow of the trees.

Then he stopped and looked up at the stars.

"Ah, there's the North Star!" he exclaimed. "I was going the wrong way," and he started off again in the right direction.

In a little while he saw a light ahead.

"A farmhouse," he muttered, "and secesh at that. I don't want to meet any more of them till I get back to my company."

He struck a road, and as it ran in the right direction, he decided to follow it, as by so doing he could make good time.

Another light came into view.

It was a farmhouse near the roadside. He heard a violin and banjo, then the thumping noise made by the feet of country dancers.

"They are having a dance there," he said. "I'll get by without being seen, I guess," and he was doing so when he found over a dozen horses hitched to the fence in front of the house.

Going cautiously up to one of them he made the discovery that they were horses belonging to the Confederate service.

"Ah! Some Secesh cavalry have stopped here to have a dance with the women folks," he muttered. "I'll pick out a good horse for myself, and not do so much walking. Ah, here's a good horse with blanket and holsters. He will suit me," and he led the horse gently away up the road for half a mile ere he mounted him.

"I have three revolvers now," he said, as he found one in each holster. "A pretty good armament, I should say. Yet I hope I won't have to use any of them before I get back to camp."

He rode some twenty miles or more, and then found that daylight was coming on.

"I must take to the woods and sleep during the day," he said, and in a little while he turned into a very heavy piece of timber, and went a quarter of a mile ere he found a spot where he thought it would be safe for him to stop for the day.

It was near a small brook, where there were both water and grass for the horse. He tied him with a halter he found on him, and then, taking a drink of water, unrolled the blanket which he had found attached to the saddle.

To his amazement he found a new uniform suit of Confederate gray rolled up in it—the uniform of a Confederate captain.

"Well, this is luck and no mistake!" he said, as he looked at the new suit before him. "With that on I could ride right through the Confederate camps. But I'd be shot as a spy if they caught me."

He looked at the uniform for some minutes as if undecided what to do.

"What's the use of staying hidden here in these woods all day?" he asked himself. "I might be able to get to the Union lines before sunset if I put them on and rode boldly forward. I'll try 'em on and see if they will fit me."

He threw off his own coat and began to put on the gray one. To his surprise he found a letter in the inside breast pocket.

Taking it out he found it was addressed to Captain St. Clair, of the Black Horse Cavalry, and that it had been opened.

It was a letter from his sister in which she spoke of the new uniform which she was sending to him.

"What a strange coincidence!" he exclaimed as he looked at the letter. "The only man in gray who has shown me any kindness, and to whom my sister and Mary Holmes may have to appeal for protection! And I have stolen his horse, uniform, and pistols! Stolen! Is it really stealing? If I thought

so I would take it back even if I lost my liberty again. It is one of the exigencies of war, and I am justified in taking it as much as if it had been on a battlefield. What a sweet, sisterly letter this is," and he read it over again.

The coat fitted him admirably, and so did the vest and trousers.

"I'll put them on," he said, "and roll mine up in the blanket. I'll take the chances of capture. He's a splendid horse, and with three revolvers I ought to be able to take care of myself."

He was soon resplendent in the new uniform, looking every inch a soldier of the South.

He laid down and slept two hours, leaving the horse to graze as far as the length of his halter would permit.

When he awoke he bathed his face, swallowed a good drink of the brook water, after which he proceeded to roll up the blanket and strap it to the cantel of the saddle.

"Now for the forlorn hope, my good charger," he said to his horse, as he sprang into the saddle.

The horse was thoroughly rested, and had eaten a good breakfast of green grass. But the corporal himself was very hungry, yet he was not worried on that account in the least.

He made a dash for the road and soon reached it. Turning northward he made off in a brisk canter.

Two miles brought him in sight of a farmhouse. He smelt the savory odors of ham and eggs, or thought he did, anyway, and in an instant he decided to ask if he could have something to eat.

The moment he stopped in front of the gate a white-haired old man appeared at the door of the house.

"Can I get some breakfast?" he asked of the old man.

"Yes, of course you can—such as we have. Light an' come in."

He sprang from the saddle and hitched the horse to a post near the gate and went in. The old man met him half way and shook hands with him.

"Come in, come in!" he said, as the young soldier returned the hearty grasp of his hand. "Always glad to see any of our soldiers. Everything in my house is at their command. Sarah!"

The loveliest young girl, apparently about his own age, he had ever seen came forward and greeted him with smiles of welcome. He was struck by her beauty and grace, and at once made her a bow of the old-time courtly style.

"I am in a hurry to go forward with important orders from the 'Secretary of War,'" he said, making another bow, "and can stay only long enough to eat a hasty breakfast."

"I am sorry you cannot stop longer with us," said the old man. "But the duties of a soldier is to obey orders. I'll give orders for your breakfast at once."

"Nothing extra on my account, my dear sir," said the visitor. "If your family have not breakfasted let me have the honor of a seat with them at the table."

"Certainly, sir, certainly. Breakfast will be ready in five minutes," and the old gentleman left the room, leaving the young girl to entertain him as best she could.

She at once began questioning him about the army, and whether or not she believed the late victory would bring about a peace between the North and the South.

"Hardly," he said. "The North has enormous resources, and will hardly be willing to acknowledge herself beaten until her resources have been called upon."

"But her soldiers can't stand before ours in battle," she said. "They have been defeated in every battle so far."

"Yes, that's true; but the war has hardly begun yet. When they bring three to one against us we'll have a hard time of it. Have you any brothers in the army?"

"No, I have no brothers—only two sisters. My mother is an invalid and my father quite old. I have wept bitter tears

that I was not a man that I might go into the army with our brave boys."

"Come in to breakfast, sir," said the old man, reappearing at that moment.

CHAPTER XI.

RESCUED AT LAST.

The corporal turned to follow his host when the thought struck him that he ought to give a name by which he might be known.

"Permit me to give you my name, sir," he said, coming to a halt. "I am Captain Banning, of Richmond, special service."

"Very glad to know you, captain," said the host. "My name is Renfro, and this is my daughter Isabelle."

He made a very profound bow to the young girl, and tendered his arm to lead her into the breakfast room.

He was introduced to the other two daughters, who were not less beautiful than their elder sister.

Being very hungry and in a great hurry, he ate fast and heartily.

"I am sorry you cannot stop with us longer," said the host.

"Yes, so am I," he replied. "But on my return I should be happy to accept your hospitality for a night."

"We should be ever so glad to have you do so," said Isabelle.

They were just rising from the table when the roar of a squadron of horse was heard.

A negress rushed into the room in a state of great excitement.

"Massa, de Yankees am er comin'!"

"Oh, heavens!" cried Isabelle Renfro, turning to the corporal, "you may be captured or killed!"

"I don't fear being killed," he said, hardly able to conceal his joy. "They don't kill prisoners of war nowadays."

"Come with me, quick!" she cried, seizing him by the hand and rushing upstairs with him. "I can hide you in the garret, where they can't find you."

He was surprised at her energy and strength, and ere he was hardly aware of what she was doing, she was trying to get him to go up a very narrow flight of stairs into a dark garret.

"It is of no use, Miss Renfro," he said, shaking his head. "They have my horse now out at the gate, and will search every nook and cranny in the house for me. If they find that you have hidden me they will fire the house to rout me out. I won't consent to bring trouble on you that way."

"We will take the chances on that," she said. "Do please go up! I wouldn't have them catch you here for anything," and she tried to force him up the stairs by pushing him.

He turned and took her in his arms, lifted her clear of the floor and started downstairs with her, saying:

"You are beautiful enough to tempt a man to sell his soul, but you can't persuade me to bring trouble upon your father in his old age."

"Oh, you perverse man! They may kill you right before our eyes."

"I am not afraid of that. This is a different age from those in which such things were done by English-speaking people," and he carried her down the flight of stairs again, into the parlor, where a dozen Union soldiers, all officers, had congregated, and there stood her on her feet.

"Ah! You are a prisoner, sir!" said a Union officer, laying a hand on his shoulder.

"Yes, that is pretty plain," he replied. "You came up

rather sudden while we were at breakfast. It is one of the casualties of war."

"So it is. What command do you belong to?"

"Special service, and under command of the general of the department."

"Well, you can come with us. We'll see that you are taken care of."

Isabelle Renfro's face was white as a sheet as she looked on and listened. She had been told that prisoners were treated brutally by the Union forces.

The Union officers were all impressed by her beauty, and showed her so much deference that she was never so much surprised in her life.

"You won't kill him?" she asked of the officer in command.

"Oh, no. We'll take him to Washington, introduce him to the President and feed him on quail and champagne all the time. We are very good to our prisoners."

"Oh, I am so glad. I heard you were very cruel to them."

"Then you heard wrong, I can assure you," said the officer, keeping a very straight face, while the others were convulsed with suppressed laughter.

They led the prisoner out of the house, and were followed by the tearful gaze of Isabelle Renfro, who had fallen in love with him at first sight.

Out of sight of the house the corporal told the major in command of the squadron of horse that he was a Union soldier.

"The deuce you are!"

"Yes."

"What are you doing in that uniform then?"

"I am an escaped prisoner," and then, having told his story, he showed him the suit of blue which was rolled up in the blanket.

"Well, I hope it is true. I have heard of Corporal Herbert, and of Fort Corporal Herbert," said the major, "but as yet I have no proof that what you have told me is true. I must keep you under guard till you are identified by some of your command."

"Of course. Which way are we going now?"

"We are making a circuit of the rebel army, and may get back home to-night or to-morrow morning."

"Well, let me be of some service to you, anyhow."

"Keep right where you are. We have all the help we want."

The major was not sure that his story was true, so he decided to keep on the safe side himself, which showed good sense on his part.

They made a hard run that day, and the corporal, still in the bright new uniform of a Confederate captain, kept well up with them, with a guard on either side of him.

Several times during the day did they run into and scatter small bands of the enemy, and at sunset found that they were pursued by a formidable body of cavalry under Stewart.

"That means that we must hurry back to our own lines as fast as we can," said the major to the officers about him. "Stewart is too strong for us. It won't do to let him come up with us. We can get away under the cover of night."

The order was given, and a straight run was made to get away from the formidable enemy behind them.

It was a hard run, but a little past midnight they had the pleasure of being challenged by the pickets of the Union army.

"Thank God!" exclaimed the corporal, when he saw that he was once more inside the lines of the Union forces.

But the guards kept charge of him until morning. Then he asked to be taken to his regiment to be identified.

He still wore the Confederate uniform, and was an object of interest to thousands of the boys in blue. But when

Major Coombs saw him he ran forward, threw his arms around his neck, saying:

"My dear captain! I am so glad to see you again!"

"Hello! It's Captain Herbert!" cried another soldier, who recognized him.

"Why, bless my soul, captain!" cried the colonel of the regiment. "What are you doing in Jeff Davis' uniform?"

"Why, I captured it, colonel," he replied. "I've been down in Dixie, you know, and one can't well get along down there in a blue rig, so I confiscated this suit. How does it fit?" and he turned around two or three times to let him admire the new suit.

"It will do for a rebel captain, but not a Union officer," remarked the colonel.

"Well, as I am only a corporal it won't hurt me any. I have my old suit with me yet."

"Do you know you are no longer a corporal?"

"No!"

"You are now a captain. I have your commission for you."

CHAPTER XII.

PROMOTED.

Had the earth opened to swallow him up, he could not have been more surprised than he was when the colonel told him he had been made a captain.

He stared at him in silence for a moment or two, and then asked:

"Are you joking me, colonel?"

"No, I am telling you a bit of pleasant news," replied the colonel. "You have been promoted to second and first lieutenant, and then made a full-fledged captain for gallant conduct in battle. Let me congratulate you," and he took his hand and shook it heartily.

"Well, this is something I didn't dream of," he said, and he shook hands with all the officers about him.

When the Dover Guards heard that he had come back with the raiders they rushed in a body to welcome him.

Such a greeting as they gave him! Some of them fell on his neck and wept. They were those who stood by him in Fort Corporal Herbert when death was busy in their ranks.

Lieutenant Joslyn of the guards came forward and shook hands with him, saying:

"You have gone up ahead of me, captain, but I am glad of it, for if ever any man deserved promotion it is you. You have fairly won it."

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart, lieutenant," he said, as he shook his hand, "But where is the company I am to command."

"One is to be given you in another regiment, I believe," put in the colonel.

"Well, I am sorry I can't stay with the guards."

"Yes, of course, but you know what the duty of a soldier is."

"Yes, to obey orders."

"That's it. You are to report to the general, who will assign you where you can soon see some more fighting."

He went to the quarters of the guards, and there found out that two more of them had been killed in the battle, the roar of which he had heard as he lay in the hospital tent.

One of them was a personal friend, and the sad news made him feel gloomy.

"Who next?" he said when the story had been told him.

"Who next?" they repeated.

Captain Risley met him and saluted, but did not offer his hand to him. Herbert returned the salute without uttering a

word to him, and then resumed the conversation with one of the guards.

Risley was almost crazy to hear from Mary Holmes, who had refused to come away with him when the army made the sudden move that left the wounded men in the hospital at the mercy of the enemy. Herbert knew it, and did not make any mention of the two girls.

At last he could stand it no longer.

He came forward and asked:

"Where did you leave Miss Holmes?"

"Right where you left her, captain," he replied.

The captain blushed and said:

"I tried to persuade her to come away, but could not."

"So she told me; but she isn't built that way. She came to nurse the wounded, and not to desert them in a time of danger.

"True blue every time," remarked one of the boys.

"Indeed she is. She shot a Confederate captain right there in the tent."

"Good! Did she kill him?"

"No. She hit him in the shoulder, and he was lying up in a farmhouse near by when I left."

"Three cheers for Mary!" cried one of the boys, and the whole company let it out with a roar.

"But your sister was there, too."

"Yes, and is yet, I guess."

"What is to become of them?"

"I don't know. I would like to lead a regiment to their rescue and the brave boys who are yet lying there on their backs. But the first duty of a soldier is to obey orders."

Again Captain Risley turned red in the face, and he wheeled and left the spot.

That remark always angered him when uttered in his presence, as he always took it as a personal allusion. The company understood it, and a smile went round.

The Confederate uniform was laid aside, and the old one of corporal was donned.

The bullet holes were there to show the wounds that had been made, and when he reported to the general of the army, commission in hand, that officer took him by the hand and said:

"I am glad to meet a brave soldier who knows what to do when he meets the enemy. You seemed to have the correct idea—fight him when you see him."

"Why, I thought that is what we came here for."

"Yes, so it is, but sometimes men don't want to fight except when the chances are all in their favor."

"Well, if you tell me to fight I'll fight. If you tell me to run, I'll obey orders."

"That's right. That's a soldier's first duty—obey orders even unto death. The adjutant-general will assign you to a company."

The adjutant assigned him to a company in which he was the youngest man in the regiment. Many of the men were old enough to be his father, and they looked at him in astonishment.

"He has won his spurs," said the adjutant. "He has been in battle and had three wounds to stand up under. Stand by him, and you will get all the fighting you want."

That was commendation enough.

They received him with open arms, and he soon found out that they were men who had come to fight for the Union and the old flag.

In ten days the new regiment was organized and sent to the front. Captain Herbert's company was at the head.

In another week an advance was ordered.

Captain Herbert told his men that under all circumstances they must obey orders, and they said they would.

Two days later they were attacked by the enemy. The

new regiment was exposed to an awfully destructive fire and suffered terribly.

Suddenly it gave way.

"Steady, men!" cried Herbert to his men, and they rallied about the colors and held the ground till a brigade rushed up to their assistance.

It was a lucky thing for the company that the brigade came up, for a rebel brigade charged at that moment and was repulsed.

They rallied and charged again, and this time they crossed bayonets.

Captain Herbert saw and recognized Captain Boland, whom Mary Holmes had wounded in the shoulder.

"Captain Boland!" he cried out, "I know you for a cowardly poltroon! Defend yourself!" and in another instant he had crossed swords with him.

They fought like tigers, for the Confederate was as brave as the bravest, for all his brutality. Blood flowed from both, and it was uncertain which would win, when a shrill scream startled them from above the roar of the battle, and a young girl came rushing, with outstretched hands, toward the Union captain.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FATAL BLUNDER.

The advance of the Union army had forced the enemy to fall back until he thought he had an advantageous position from which to give battle.

That position was in the vicinity of Fort Corporal Herbert, and the hospital tent from which the two brave Yankee girls had aided the gallant corporal to make his escape was in sight of the Union lines at one point.

Captain Herbert had seen the tent, and his heart yearned to make a dash for the rescue of his comrades and the two girls. But he could not do so, as the line of battle would have been weakened.

Captain Risley also saw and recognized the tent and hospital flag. The brigade to which he was attached was ordered to make a detour through the woods and come out in the rear of the enemy's right flank, which would be in the vicinity of the tent.

He went to the colonel of the regiment and said:

"That hospital tent out there shelters a number of wounded men belonging to my company. They are prisoners, as are also two young ladies of our town, who are nursing them. I would like to make a dash to rescue them. My men are eager for the chance. I beg of you to let me have the honor of doing so."

"How many men will you need for the dash, captain?" the colonel asked.

"Two companies will be enough, I think."

"That would be very dangerous."

"The danger is what we court, colonel. They are the brave fellows who fought in Fort Corporal Herbert, and we feel that we ought to do something to rescue them."

"Do you know that they are still there?"

"I only know that Corporal Herbert left them there when he made his escape, and I see the hospital flag flying over it."

"Well, wait till I give the order, and then go in. Keep your company and the next one on your left in readiness to rush in at the word."

He came away and held a conference with Captain Blake, of the other company, and both officers told their men what they were going to do.

The boys of the Dover Guards were almost beside them-

selves when they heard it. They began to think that Captain Risley had some fight in him after all. Yet they heartily wished for Captain Herbert to be with them in the desperate dash.

The brigade was lying in the shelter of a thick woods waiting for the order to move. The division commander had sent it there for the purpose of meeting an emergency which he foresaw might arise. The position of the brigade was unknown to the enemy, and the great point was to keep it unknown until the time to strike came.

The battle was going furiously on, and the brave fellows of the brigade were eager and impatient to get into it and strike a blow for flag and country.

It was at this point that Captain Risley lost his head in his eagerness to accomplish two things—to rescue Mary Holmes by a bold dash, and distinguish himself by the dash. He believed that the brigade was near enough not only to witness the feat, but to render prompt assistance if any should be needed.

Suddenly he gave the order.

"Charge!"

The two companies understood that he was to give the order, and in a flash they were up and away like the brave fellows they were.

But one of those strange fatalities that sometimes occur on battlefields immediately followed.

The other companies of the regiment, thinking the order had been given to charge, seeing two companies going pell-mell at the enemy, sprang forward, regardless of the yells of their officers.

The general rode furiously down the line to the colonel and demanded:

"What do you mean by this?"

Pale and dazed, the colonel replied:

"I don't know! I gave no order to charge!" and he dashed away to do his best to order the men back.

But they were intent on getting at the enemy.

Major Coombs was doing his best to call them back, but only a few heard and obeyed.

On, on, swept the brave boys toward the hospital tent, going round a hill in their grand charge. In another minute or two they were at the tent.

But no wounded were there.

Neither were the two girls.

"They are not here, boys!" cried Captain Risley. "Come away! We must get back to our lines! Keep well together now!"

They turned to retrace their steps, only to find that a united enemy had slipped round the hill behind them and cut off their retreat. A whole brigade of the enemy confronted them.

"Surrender!" cried an officer, dashing forward at the head of his men.

Captain Risley was appalled. He had never before been so close to the enemy.

He was about to throw down his sword in token of surrender, when one of the members of his company fired and the officer tumbled from his horse.

That was the signal for the enemy, and a withering volley was poured into the Union ranks. Nearly a third went down under it.

Risley was paralyzed with horror. But the brave fellows around him returned the fire and many of the enemy bit the dust.

It was an unequal contest, however, and the result was that not a man of the two companies got back to the Union lines. Those not killed or wounded surrendered, throwing down their arms and crying for quarter.

Half a hundred men belonging to other companies of the

regiment were also captured. The colonel and Major Coombs barely escaped with their lives.

Then came the fatality of the movement in the counter move of the enemy. A division swept the brigade from the woods and threatened the Union flank, to save which the general in command had to make moves that lost him a great victory, which he would have gained without doubt had the presence of the brigade been kept concealed from the enemy an hour longer.

But where were the brave boys who had been in that hospital?

They had been moved away the day before, and the two girls sought refuge in a farmhouse near by.

The wounded from the field were brought to the house, and the farmer threatened to have the two girls shot as spies if they did not nurse the wounded Confederates as they came in.

"Oh, Winnie," cried Mary, "our own boys are being wounded, too, and here we are nursing their enemies. I am going to them if I get shot myself," and she turned and ran out of the house.

Winnie followed her and the two girls were soon in the way of moving masses of the enemy.

"Go back! You will be killed!" cried many of the soldiers, who took them to be Southern women.

But they would not go back. They saw the beloved flag of the Union only a half mile away, where the brave boys in blue were defending it with their lives, and to get there they were willing to risk everything.

Suddenly they heard a terrific roar behind them, and on looking back beheld a sight that sent terror to their hearts.

The Black Horse Cavalry was coming, eight hundred strong, the finest mounted command in the Southern army. They were coming like a thunderbolt.

"Oh, my God, we are lost!" cried Winnie, almost paralyzed with horror.

Mary Holmes sprang for a tree, knowing that horses would not run over that.

The storm of men and horses swept by, and in five minutes she was behind them.

But where was Winnie Herbert?

She looked everywhere for her. But she could not see anything of her.

"Oh, Winnie! Winnie!" she sobbed. "You have perished, and I am left alone! They must have trampled you into the very earth! Oh, if I could have died with you! Why did you not come behind the tree with me?"

Dazed and half-crazed at the sudden calamity which had overtaken her fair friend, Mary ran on toward the Union lines as fast as her heels could carry her.

In ten minutes she reached them, and then she saw a line of gray charge up against the blue. Somehow she had lost all fear now that she was under the old flag again.

"Stand by the old flag, men!" she cried, and her flushed face, flashing eyes, and great beauty called forth cheer after cheer from the boys in blue.

Suddenly she saw two officers in a sword combat. It was Corporal Herbert in the uniform of a captain for the Union, and Captain Boland, whom she had shot in the hospital!

It came near costing him his life, for the captain got the lock on his sword and hurled it from his hand.

It whizzed through the air and fell at Mary Holmes' feet.

In trying to leap back out of his reach Herbert's heels struck a dead body, and the next moment he was lying flat on his back at the mercy of his enemy.

Boland rushed at him to run him through.

Mary Holmes snatched up the sword which had fallen at her feet, and rushed upon the Confederate officer and ran it through his body clear up to the hilt.

Boland grasped the weapon with both hands and fell to his knees.

She held to the hilt, and glared into his face, as if a fierce fascination held her there.

"My God, Mary!" cried Herbert, springing to his feet. "Is it you?"

"Yes," she answered, releasing her hold on the sword hilt, and promptly fainting—woman like.

Just at that moment the enemy fell back. The charge was a failure, so far as driving the Union line back was concerned.

The Union line remained unbroken, but they did not follow the enemy back, as too great interests in other parts of the field would have been endangered thereby.

Herbert was left free for the time to attend to the brave girl who had saved his life in the battle.

She was still unconscious, and he held her in his arms. The men of his command had not heard of her, and did not know what to make of her sudden appearance there.

"Let me carry her for you, cap'n," said one of his men.

"Bring me some water," he asked, gently depositing her on the ground.

The soldier went to a score of men ere he found one who had any water in his canteen.

He brought it to him, and Herbert poured some of it in her face.

But it was warm water, and did no good.

"Here's some brandy, captain," said an officer, coming up and offering his canteen. "Is she wounded?"

"No. I think she has only fainted. Thank you, major," and he poured some of it down her throat.

She opened her eyes and groaned.

"You are not hurt, Mary?" he asked, in an anxious tone of voice.

"I—I don't know," she replied, in a half dazed sort of way. "I was afraid you would be killed."

"I am not hurt. You saved my life. It belongs to you from this hour. But where is Winnie? Where did you leave her?"

"I don't know. The Black Horse Cavalry charged over her, and I never saw her any more."

"My God!" groaned Herbert, turning deathly pale. "My poor sister! My poor mother!" and he broke down entirely, and wept like a woman.

"Steady, men!" cried the colonel. "The enemy is coming again! Meet charge with charge. Steady now! Repulse them once more, and the day is ours!"

"Mary Holmes!" cried Herbert, as he lifted the girl to her feet. "The enemy is charging again! You must get away from here! I must stand with my men! I can't go with you!"

"Never mind me!" she exclaimed, suddenly recovering herself. "Fight for your country!"

"Will you go away to the rear?"

"Let me stay here! You may be wounded!"

"In God's name, run away!" he cried, and the next moment he ran forward, picked up a sword, and placed himself with his men.

"Give them a volley when they are in ten feet of you!" he sung out, "and then dash at 'em with the bayonet. Steady,

CHAPTER XIV.

A LIFE FOR A LIFE.

When Captain Herbert saw the young girl rushing toward him shrieking, his attention was drawn toward her for the moment.

now! The day is ours! They are making their last effort! Now! Fire!"

The volley mowed down the front ranks of the enemy, and demoralized the rear rank—for they came two deep.

"At 'em, men! Give 'em cold steel!"

The men dashed at them, and the whole regiment did the same thing. In just two minutes after the volley the enemy in front gave way.

The yells of the regiment encouraged the others, and the charge was repulsed. It was the only part of the Union line on which the enemy failed to make an impression.

The day closed with a drawn battle, which should have been a decisive victory for the Union. The fatal mistake made by the charge on the hospital tent by Captain Risley had robbed them of the victory.

Both armies drew off to wait for another day in which to renew the battle. Under the light of the moon burial parties from both sides attended to the dead and wounded.

Thousands had fallen. Groans and cries could be heard in every direction.

As the burial squads went out between the lines Captain Herbert went in search of the colonel of his regiment to ask permission to go with them to look for his sister.

He found that the colonel had been killed and the lieutenant-colonel desperately wounded. The major was in command of the regiment. To him he told the story of his sister and Mary Holmes, and of their presence on the battlefield.

"You have won a name to-day, captain," said the major. "The general has asked for you. He says you did more than any company officer in the brigade to hold the line to-day. Of course you can go out in search of your sister, and I hope you may find her well and unhurt."

The young captain hurried away to the battlefield. The rays of the moon came through the gray smoke that hung over the battlefield like a mist. Yet there was light enough for him to see the forms of the dead and wounded. He did not stop to attend to any who called piteously to him. He was too anxious to think of anyone else at that moment.

The course of the Black Horse Cavalry was quite familiar to him, as he had seen that magnificent body sweep over a portion of the field.

To that part of the ground he repaired at once.

But the scrutiny of his anxious gaze did not reveal to him any signs of a woman's dress.

"Oh, if she did escape, it was by a miracle!" he said, as he stopped and wiped the perspiration from his brow. "I hope the miracle was performed. She is too brave, true, and loving to perish that way."

In wandering about over the track of the cavalry charge he met a burial squad of the enemy.

He walked boldly up to them and asked:

"Have you seen the body of a young girl anywhere on the field?"

"A young girl!" exclaimed several in astonishment.

"Yes. She was caught in the charge of the Black Horse Cavalry, since which time she has not been seen."

"Haven't seen her," came from several of the party.

"I think I can give you some news of her," said a young officer, stepping forward. "There is a report in our army to-night that an officer of the Black Horse Cavalry was seen fighting at the head of his company while holding a young lady in his arms on his horse."

sprang forward, grasped the young lieutenant's hand, and said:

"You are a soldier. You have the face and manner of a brave man, and a brave man is always a generous man. She for whom I am searching is my young and only sister. She is pure and good. I love her even as you love your own sister, if you have one. Need I appeal to you in vain to see, when you return to your lines, if she is safe and unhurt?"

"There is my hand—the hand of a soldier. I give you my promise of honor that I will go to the headquarters of the Black Horse Cavalry and inquire for her."

"Thanks. I could ask no more. My name is Herbert. Hers is Winnie Herbert. I was a corporal when she saw me last. Tell her I am a captain now, and that Mary Holmes is in our lines safe and well. Tell her that Captain St. Clair of the Black Horse Cavalry, if alive, will befriend her."

"He is alive—or was a day or two ago," said the young officer. "I heard some officers speak of him as being in a fair way for promotion."

"I am glad to hear it. He is a brave man and a gentleman. Give me your name, please?"

"Lieutenant Balfour, of Virginia, Ninth Regiment."

"I hope we may meet again when we can shake hands as friends, not enemies, lieutenant."

"Thanks. I hope so, too, captain."

The two officers then shook hands and parted.

Captain Herbert hurried back to his command, believing that Winnie was alive and safe.

"She was snatched up by some officer to save her from being trampled to death," he said to himself as he hurried along over the bloody field. "She was in their way. Mary could see nothing of her after the charge, and the story of Lieutenant Balfour corroborates all the other incidents. I must see Mary and tell her what I have heard. She will be so glad to have that much hope even."

But where was Mary Holmes?

He had parted from her just before joining his men to repel the last desperate charge of the enemy. Where did she go when he told her to run out of the way to danger? Every house for miles around was filled with wounded soldiers. Where could she find shelter under such circumstances? The uncertainty was now on her account rather than on the account of his sister.

When he reached his command again he found one of his men on watch for him. The man saluted him.

"Give me your hand, comrade," he said to the man, instead of returning the salute. "Give me your hand? You stood by me to-day in a way I like," and the two clasped hands and looked each other in the face. They had faced death together, and were now friends until death should part them.

"I've been waiting to tell you where the young lady is, captain."

"Ah, that is what I want to know, my friend. Where is she?"

"Come with me."

The captain followed him to a large field hospital.

There she was assisting the surgeons in binding up the ghastly wounds of the brave men who had been torn by shot and shell.

He gazed at her in silence for a few minutes, and then went up and touched her elbow.

She looked around, and gave a start when she saw who he was.

"Thank God, you are not hurt!" she exclaimed.

"I am not hurt," he said, grasping her hand. "I have come to tell you that Winnie is not, either, in all probability."

"Oh, thank heaven for that!" she cried, almost falling with emotions of joy.

He told her the story.

CHAPTER XV.

AFTER THE BATTLE.

The words of the young officer filled his heart with a hope that she yet lived, even though in the camp of the enemy. He

"She rode at the head of the charge against our lines," he said, "held on the horse by some brave officer. What an adventure for one so young!"

"Yes, indeed! Oh, how glad I am that she is alive!" and she buried her face in her hands and burst into tears.

"All's well that ends well," he said. "Control yourself for the sake of these brave fellows around you."

"I will! I will!" she said, wiping away her tears and trying to smile.

But he could see that her physical powers had been taxed almost to their limit. She had not closed her eyes for more than forty-eight hours, and had eaten but two scant meals during that time.

"Mary Holmes, I owe you my life," he said, "and now I am going to look out and save yours. Come with me. You have got to have both food and rest or you will perish. Come right along now. I am an officer who must be obeyed," and he took her by the arm and led her away from the hospital.

He led her back to his camp and sent one of his men to the baggage train for his tent. Fortunately he got it, and a half hour later it was pitched, blankets procured, also some rations, which she ate heartily.

"Now lie down and sleep," he said. "I will guard the tent. You shall not be disturbed."

"But you need sleep, too," she said.

"It is my desire to stand guard over your slumbers tonight," he said.

She said no more, and he passed out of the tent and left her alone.

When she awoke at daylight, she found him on guard in front of the tent.

"Have you been here all night?" she asked.

"Yes."

"Why did you not let some of your men relieve you, if a guard was necessary?"

"Because it was my private treasure, which I have no right to impose on the government. Besides it was a pleasure to me to know that I was watching over you while you slept."

A blush mantled her cheeks, and a happy light came into her eyes as she heard him thus speak of his interest in her.

"I'll see that you have some breakfast," he said, after a little pause. "You will need some water, too. I don't know whether I can get you any, but I will see," and he went away without giving her a chance to protest against the trouble he was taking on himself.

The boy Remus had clung to him through all his troubles and adventures. He was with the company all night, and when he found him that morning he had his rations cooked ready for him.

"Ah, Remus!" he said to the faithful black, "you were never more handy than you are this morning."

"Dat's er fac, sah," said the darky, not knowing what else to say.

"Can you get me a pail of water?"

"Yes, sah."

"Well, do so as quick as you can, and I'll owe you more thanks than a lifetime can pay."

The negro took a pail and hurried away in quest of water, while the captain procured a pocket-comb, glass, and brush, and carried them to the tent.

"The enemy fell back last night," he said to her. "We shall probably not have any fighting to-day. Do you know the whole army is singing your praises this morning?"

"Why, what for?"

"Hundreds of men saw you run a Confederate officer through the body yesterday, and now army correspondents are after you by the dozen. As they will describe your appearance in their papers, I have brought you a comb, brush, and

glass. Water will be here soon. Ah! Here comes Remus now."

"Yes, sah, heah I is," said Remus, as he put down the pail.

"Now bring on the breakfast."

"Yes, sah," and he hurried away to bring the rations.

She primped and dressed her hair as best she could, and when she reappeared she was looking as sweet as ever.

They were half through the meal, when a staff officer dashed up on horseback, and asked:

"Are you Captain Herbert?"

"I am."

"This is for you!" and he handed him a note, after which he saluted and dashed away again.

He opened the note and read it.

"I am promoted!" he exclaimed, as he handed it to her.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BRAVE DAUGHTER OF THE JUDGE.

The note was from the general commanding the brigade, informing him that as the colonel of his regiment was killed, the lieutenant-colonel badly wounded, the major would have to take command, which left that position open for him.

"So you are to be major?" Mary asked, when she read the letter.

"Yes, and to act also as lieutenant-colonel until that officer gets able to return to the field."

"And if he never returns?"

"I would then take his place."

"You would be the youngest colonel in the army, then."

"I don't know. I know that I would be proud to be one at any age, for the sake of my mother and sister."

"Yes, of course, for they are so very proud of you now and always have been. You deserve all the love they can give you."

"I am not sure of that, but I am glad you have such a good opinion of me."

"Oh, you don't know what I think of you! You have been like a real brother to me. What would have become of me last night if you had not brought me here? I was just ready to die of hunger and fatigue."

"Do you feel all right this morning?"

"Yes. I am ever so much refreshed. If I had Winnie with me now I would even be happy, if it were possible for one to be so under such circumstances."

"If Winnie and you get together again I want you both to go home as fast as the trains can take you."

"Do you want to get rid of us so much as that?"

"I want the satisfaction of knowing that both of you are out of danger. Just think of what your mother and Winnie's must be suffering to-day. Ah, here comes the army correspondents. Look out, now. They are going to publish what you say to them."

Three correspondents came up and asked if she was the girl who fought with and slew a rebel captain the day before.

She admitted that she was, and said that she was more afraid of newspaper men than of all the soldiers of the Confederacy.

Then she told her story, modestly, and without any hesitancy.

"I didn't mean to do anything of the kind," she said. "I am not a fighting woman. I thought he was going to kill my friend Captain Herbert, and to save his life I snatched up the sword and ran it through him. Oh, it was horrible! I cannot understand the fate that has thrown me into the midst of a great battle. I did not wish it. I did no seek it. I was trying

to get away. And as soon as I can get with my sweet friend, Captain Herbert's sister, I am going home, unless circumstances over which I have no control should keep me here. All our boys from Dover are either dead or prisoners, save Captain Herbert. It was a sad day for our people at home yesterday."

Ere she was through talking with the correspondents hundreds of other soldiers came to gaze at her and pay her their respects. The news of her exploit had gone through the whole army.

The general of the division came with his staff, and offered her an escort to go wherever she wished.

She said she wanted to go home as soon as Winnie Herbert could join her.

At last the wife of the quartermaster-general came to see her.

"You must remain with me until your friend turns up," she said, and Mary joyfully accepted her invitation.

"Come with me now, then," said the lady. "I have but a few minutes to spare."

She looked at Herbert as if to know what his wishes were.

"Go, by all means," said he. "I will know where to find you or where to send Winnie when she comes."

"Yes," said the general's wife. "Send her to me at once. What a peril for a young girl to be exposed to."

"Good-by," said Mary, extending her hand to Herbert.

"Good-by," he said, pressing her hand tenderly. "Don't forget that my life is yours."

She said nothing more, but turned away and went with the lady, only too glad to get such protection as that good friend could give her.

She had not been gone five minutes ere orders came for the division to move to a certain point to which the enemy was converging. Herbert went to his men and shook hands with every one, saying:

"I am to be your major, now, but I will keep my eye on you, and never forget that it was the backing you gave me that won my promotion. Lieutenant Jackson will now be your captain. Stand by him as you stood by me, and you will all win a name your country will be proud of."

"We'll do it, major!" they all responded. "We'll push you up head yet."

"Push the old flag forward and keep it there," he said, "and we'll smash the Confederacy into a cocked hat before another year passes. They are good fighters over there, but we'll beat them at it yet."

The march began, and in the afternoon they came up with the enemy, and some hard fighting took place. But Herbert's regiment did not get into it. When night came on the camp fires of both armies could be seen from a hill just beyond the Union lines.

"We are too close to each other to avoid a fight," he said to the acting colonel of the regiment.

"Yes, I was thinking as much myself," returned the colonel.

"I am half suspicious of an attempt to stampede us during the night."

"Why do you think so?" the other asked, as if surprised.

"Because were I in their place and in command, it is just what I would do," he replied. "Everything in the way of position is favorable to it."

The colonel was silent and thoughtful for a minute or two, and then remarked:

"I'll go and see the general about it. I am quite of the same opinion with yourself. By the way, have you heard the decision of the court martial in the case of Colonel Rose, of the — Regiment?"

"No. I didn't know that any decision had been reached."

"They exonerate him, and lay the entire burden of blame on Captain Risley. He testified before the court that he had

told Captain Risley that he could make the dash at that field hospital when the order to charge was given, and not before —that Risley gave the order himself, and the others followed in the enthusiasm of the moment."

"Well, I don't see that they could have made any other decision."

"No, of course not. But it means serious business for Risley when he is exchanged."

"Yes. It means that he will be shot for disobedience of orders in the face of the enemy."

"Yes."

"And he ought to be, too, for it was through him the day was lost, and a couple of hundred brave fellows killed, wounded, and captured. Major Coombs was captured, too. The colonel and he tried to bring the boys back."

"Yes, that's what he said on his trial. He said Major Coombs was as much astonished as he was when the boys made the dash. The major will tell Risley, if they are both alive and prisoners, that he will be held responsible for the disaster."

"Of course. The major would, no doubt, like to order his execution. He is a great disciplinarian."

The two officers parted.

Major Herbert returned to his post, and the acting colonel went to see the brigade commander about the major's fears of a night attack by the enemy.

The general did not think there was any danger.

"Our picket line is very strong," he said. "They can't rush over it with impunity, as the firing would be too heavy for them. Yet if you wish to do so you can have your men sleep on their arms."

And he did.

But the enemy did not make the attempt that he was expected to make, and the night passed away very quietly.

A little after sunrise, however, the onset was made. It was a tremendous rush, and blood flowed like water.

They were repulsed, but they came back again supported by the Black Horse cavalry. Major Herbert's men received the brunt of it.

Just in front of him the horse of a Confederate officer fell under him. The gallant major rushed upon him and made him a prisoner.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE EXCHANGE.

"Ah, we meet again, and I am your prisoner!" exclaimed the Confederate officer, tendering his sword to Herbert.

"Ah, is it you, Captain St. Clair!" cried Major Herbert, very much astonished at recognizing his prisoner.

"Yes. It is the fortune of war."

"Keep your sword. I won't take it!" said the major, grasping his hand. "Are you hurt?"

"Only bruised, thanks."

"Captain, tell me! Do you know where my sister is?"

"Yes. She is at my mother's in Hanover County. I sent her there for safety."

"Thank God for that! Give me your hand again! You are my guest—not my prisoner!" and the two men shook hands again in the presence of both armies, while brave men were falling all around them.

"Come away, captain," said the major. "We are not through with this business yet." And he led him away to the rear, where he placed him in charge of a soldier, saying:

"Take care of this prisoner, and see that he is treated like a gentleman. I'll see you again, captain," and he bowed, wheeled round, and hurried back to his men.

But the enemy had begun to fall back, and in a little while was in full retreat from the field.

The Union boys cheered till they were hoarse over the retreat of the enemy. They had gotten the best of the fight, and had lost but a few score men.

When the battle was over Major Herbert was in command of the regiment. The acting colonel had been killed by a minie ball.

As soon as he could do so he hastened to see his prisoner.

He found him among a lot of others who had been captured that day.

"Come with me, captain. You are my guest. I'll take your case before the general and see if I may not send you back to your command."

"I don't see how I deserve so much consideration at your hands, major," said the Confederate cavalryman.

"Leave all that to me, please. Come, tell me how you found my sister? I am anxious to know."

"I found her running for her life right in the path of the cavalry," said the prisoner, "and I knew that she would be trampled to death if I did not save her. I rushed at her, reached down from the saddle, and taking her by the arm, swung her up on the horse to a seat in front of me. Of course, I had to ride on with my men, and I held on to her even up to within a few rods of your lines. It was not until we were retreating that I knew who it was I had thus saved. The recognition was mutual, and from that moment she had no fears for herself. But she grieved for her companion, Miss Holmes, until Lieutenant Banning came to me with the story of his meeting with you on the battlefield that night, and gave me your message to her. When I told her she wept for joy."

"Yes, of course. So did Miss Holmes when I told her what Lieutenant Banning told me."

Major Herbert took him to his tent and kept him there all night as his guest. The next morning he took him to see the general of the brigade, and told him his story. The general shook hands with him, and said he would go with him to see the division commander.

That officer took him to the corps commander, who in turn sent him to the headquarters of the commander-in-chief.

The general looked at the young major as he told his story, and then asked:

"Do you wish to have him restored to his people?"

"I wish to have him saved the hardships of an imprisonment," replied Herbert, "and if not inconsistent with the interest of the service, I would like to send him back. He would do the same for me."

"I understand your feelings in the matter, Major Herbert," said the general. "I think we can arrange the matter. We'll see if they will give us Captain Risley for Captain St. Clair."

The young major turned deathly pale.

The general noticed it and asked:

"Doesn't that suit you?"

"I have no right to object to anything you may suggest, general," he replied. "Captain Risley belonged to my old company of the Dover Guards of the — New York regiment."

"Then you are the man to make the exchange. I give you full authority in the matter," and he picked up a pen and wrote a short order to that effect.

Handing it to Herbert, he added:

"I am glad to hear that your sister has been rescued and in such good hands. I hope you may have the pleasure of seeing her soon."

"Thank you, general," he returned, and saluting he turned away and left headquarters, accompanied by Captain St. Clair.

"This is sorrowful business for you, major," said the captain, as they rode away together.

"Yes, but not that I have any love for Captain Risley, for I

have not. There is no man in your army who would rejoice more at hearing of my death than would Captain Risley. We are rivals for the hand of the same young lady."

"Ah!"

"Yes, and when I was his corporal he treated me like a menial instead of a soldier."

"There is no love lost between you, then?"

"None whatever. But there are those who will say I took this step to seek vengeance on him."

"I understand. The commander-in-chief can refute any such a charge as that."

They returned to the headquarters of the regiment of which he was now the acting colonel, and spent the night there.

Early the next morning he went out with a flag of truce and met one from the other side—a tall, dignified officer.

"We have Captain St. Clair of the Black Horse Cavalry a prisoner in our lines," he said to the officer. "You have Captain Risley, of the — New York regiment a prisoner in your lines. We offer our prisoner in exchange for yours, without any formality in the matter."

"I have no authority in the matter," said the Confederate. "But if you will meet me here at this hour to-morrow I will be pleased to give you the answer of the general."

"I will await your signal at any hour," said Herbert, bowing and returning to his lines.

Late in the afternoon the flag of truce was seen coming from the Confederate lines. Major Herbert hastened to meet it and ascertain what it portended.

"The exchange is satisfactory," said the Confederate, "and will take place at nine o'clock to-morrow morning."

"Very well. That hour will do as well as any other. Captain St. Clair will be here at that hour. I shall bring him alone."

They parted to meet again the next morning.

Precisely at the hour appointed the two flags of truce met half way between the two lines.

"Good-by, major," said St. Clair, extending his hand to Herbert.

"Good-by, captain. Tell my sister that I am well, and that Mary is in good hands. Give her my love."

Thus they parted.

Captain Risley came forward and extended his hand to Herbert.

"I cannot shake hands with you, captain," said the young major. "You have been the cause of the ruin of the Dover Guards."

"It is false, sir!" exclaimed the captain, resentfully.

"The court-martial that tried your colonel has laid all the blame on you. You will be shot for disobedience of orders."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ACTS OF A COWARD.

Captain Risley stopped and gazed at him like one in a dream.

"What do you mean?" he asked in husky tones, his face the color of ashes.

"I mean that you will be shot for disobedience of orders. The colonel told you that you could charge on that hospital when the order to charge came. You did not wait for the order, but gave it on your own responsibility, made the charge, lost two companies of the regiment, revealed the presence of our troops in that piece of woods an hour before it was intended by the general, and caused us the loss of the victory. That is enough to cause a thousand men to be shot."

Captain Risley was staggered.

Somehow his overwhelming conceit had never suggested to him the magnitude of his offense. He had made the charge for the purpose of rescuing Mary Holmes and the wounded Dover boys, thinking it would be an exploit that would lead to his promotion, as Corporal Herbert's fight had led to his.

But he little dreamed that even success would be no excuse for such a flagrant violation of discipline, and when he heard of the terrible results that followed his foolhardy action, as Major Herbert explained, he was almost paralyzed with horror.

"Was that what I was exchanged for?" he asked.

"Yes."

"And you asked for permission to bring me back to my death?"

"No. I captured Captain St. Clair, and, as he had been kind to my sister and Miss Holmes, I asked——"

"Miss Holmes? Where is she?"

"She is inside our lines, with the wife of the quartermaster-general."

"Have you seen her?"

"Yes. She saved my life on the battlefield the other day, killing the Confederate officer who had disarmed me."

"You lie! You know you lie! What was she doing on the field?"

He was frantic with jealous rage, and seemed like one almost bereft of his senses.

"You know that I am not a liar," said Herbert, very calmly. "If you were not my prisoner I'd punish you as you deserve."

"I am not your prisoner. I am no longer a prisoner. I've just been exchanged."

"I am instructed to put you under arrest, and turn you over to the provost marshal."

"Then I am not going with you. We are on neutral ground here between the two armies. I refuse to go with you!" and he stopped with a determined air, and refused to go any further with him.

As he had come out under a flag of truce Major Herbert was unarmed, as was his prisoner.

"You had better come along," remarked Herbert.

"I shall go the other way," and suiting the action to the word he turned and started to retrace his footsteps toward the enemy's lines.

"You had better come along with me, captain," said Herbert, following him, "or I shall have to use force."

Quick as a flash Risley stooped and picked up two stones weighing several pounds each, saying at the same time:

"You had better not try force on me. I won't have it!"

"Captain Risley, I am going to take you in, dead or alive!" said the young major.

Risley wheeled and hurled one of the stones at him and took to his heels. The stone passed within an inch of his head.

If he had not dodged very nimbly he would have been downed by the stone.

As it was, it gave Risley a start, and as he was running for life, he ran faster than he had ever before.

But Herbert had always been fleet of foot, too, and, nothing daunted, he dashed away in hot pursuit.

"Coward! Traitor!" he cried. "I'll take you dead or alive!"

He gained on him, but it was plain that ere he could overtake him he would be inside the lines of the Confederate army.

But that did not deter him a moment in the pursuit.

The Confederates were surprised at seeing their late prisoner flying back to them, pursued by the Union officer with the flag of truce still in his hand.

Captain St. Clair stood in the midst of a group of officers, watching the strange proceeding.

Risley reached the group and sung out:

"Gentlemen, I demand protection. I will join the Confederate army! I don't wish to go back."

Major Herbert came up.

"What's the trouble, major?" Captain St. Clair asked.

"Captain Risley refuses to go to his command," said Herbert. "He is to be courtmartialed, and prefers to return to you as a prisoner."

"In that case, then," said St. Clair, "as a man of honor I will go back with you as your prisoner."

"No. Just give me permission to arrest him—that is all I ask."

"But he declares his willingness to become a Confederate soldier," said another officer, "which puts another face on the matter."

"No matter what phase it assumes," said Captain St. Clair to his comrades, "I shall go back with Major Herbert if Captain Risley does not."

"You would do right in so doing," said an old colonel who fought with Scott in Mexico, "but we have no right to send him back if he offers to enlist in our army."

"I don't ask you to send him back," said Herbert. "I merely ask that I be permitted to arrest him."

"Captain Risley," said St. Clair, turning to the returned prisoner, "as a man of honor you are bound to go with Major Herbert."

"There is a conspiracy against my life among the officers of my regiment and brigade," replied Risley, "and I decline to place myself in their hands. I would be shot before sunrise to-morrow, if not before sunset to-day."

"We have nothing to do with that. Either you return with him or I will."

"I shall not return."

"Then I will. I am sorry I have been held as worth no more than one like you. Major Herbert, I beg leave to say that I am still your prisoner."

"Wait a moment, please," said Major Herbert. "Lend me your sword, colonel."

The colonel did so.

"Please hand one to Captain Risley. We'll settle this in a way that men of honor can approve."

This was a startling proposition under the circumstances. But it struck home to the hearts of the fiery Southerners, with whom "honor" and courage were pet hobbies.

"Ah!" ejaculated the white-haired old colonel. "You are every inch a true soldier, major—a true soldier, sir. Give the captain a sword, Lieutenant Blake. Give him a soldier's chance for his life."

The young officer gave up his sword to Risley, who, pale as death, took it as the forlorn hope of his life, and said:

"I protest against this outrage. I renounce my allegiance to the United States, and——"

"My dear sir," said the white-mustached old colonel, interrupting him, "we have nothing to do with that. If you refuse to fight, as men of honor, we are bound to receive or recognize you as a soldier. We have no use for cowards."

He was in for it.

There was no way of escape.

He knew that Herbert was his superior with the sword, and under other circumstances he would have preferred the revolver as weapons.

"Will you go with me or fight?" Major Herbert demanded.

"I will fight," was the reply.

"It is to be a fight to the death then, for I am going to take you with me, dead or alive."

"Very well. Let it be so," and all at once he became very calm and cool.

"Guard!" cried the young major, crossing swords with him. They were at it in a flash.

The bright blades flashed in the sunlight, swished through the air, rang against each other, and came near drawing blood the first ten seconds of the combat.

To the surprise of even Herbert himself, Risley was cool, wary, and cautious. He defended himself with skill and courage. But it was a courage born of despair.

There was a sudden flash; a thrust, and Risley's sword dropped from his hand as he staggered backward.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DUEL IN THE CONFEDERATE LINES.

It was a scene for an artist.

Back some little distance from where the group of officers stood were thousands of Confederate soldiers looking on at the sword duel between two Union officers.

They could not understand it, but like all soldiers, such a sight was deeply interesting to them. They knew that their officers understood the matter, and to them they left the settlement of the dispute.

But when one of the Union officers received a cut by a most difficult stroke a cheer went up from some of them.

The old colonel raised his hand for silence, and the stillness of death fell upon them. They held their breath and gazed at them as if life and death hung in the balance for all of them.

"I—am—wounded!" gasped Risley, reeling and pressing his hand to his breast.

"Yes," said Major Herbert. "Will you go with me?"

"Yes—when I am dead."

"But you are not dead yet. Take up your sword and defend yourself."

He made no reply, but reeled and staggered like a drunken man.

The others stood silent as statues, and looked on.

Major Herbert turned the point of his sword to the ground and leaned upon it, keeping his eyes fixed on his opponent.

Blood was seen trickling over Risley's hand as he pressed it against his breast.

Suddenly he turned to Herbert and cried out:

"You are a coward! You knew you were an expert with the sword! Give me a chance with the pistol! I demand it!"

"You shall have it, though you have no right to demand any consideration at my hands. You are a traitor to your flag, and a disgrace to the flag you belong to. Gentlemen, can you accommodate us with revolvers a few moments?"

"Yes, of course," said the courtly old colonel, and several of them tendered weapons.

There was no lack of firearms in those days. It was the business of men to kill each other then.

One was placed in the hand of Risley before one had been given to Major Herbert.

Crack! Crack! Crack!

He began firing at him, unarmed though he was.

Major Herbert stood still as a statue and gazed at him.

Crack! went a revolver in the hand of the old colonel, and Risley reeled backward and fell heavily to the ground.

"He is a cowardly dog!" said the old grizzled soldier. "He aimed to shoot you down ere you got a weapon in your hand."

"I thank you, sir," said Herbert, making a profound bow. "I am fortunate to meet such soldiers. Can I have the use of an ambulance in which to convey the body to my people?"

"Yes," returned the colonel. "You shall have all the assistance you may need, sir," and he sent a young lieutenant to summon an ambulance at once.

Herbert went over to where Risley lay, and found that he was not quite dead.

"He is alive yet," he said. "But I shall take him to our people for surgical treatment."

"He will not live to reach your lines, sir," said an officer.

"He is going now."

"Yes, I suppose he is. I am sorry this has ended this way, but I could do no other."

"Your conduct has been that of a soldier of honor," remarked the old colonel. "You are very young, but I think we shall hear from you again. I hope you may outlive the war, young man," and he extended his hand to the young officer as he spoke.

"Thanks. I heartily wish the same good fortune for all of you," returned Herbert. "Will you do me the kindness to let me have your names, gentlemen. We may meet again, and I may have the chance to return the courtesies you have this day shown to me. The fortunes of war frequently lead to strange surprises."

They gave him their names, rank, and regiment, all of which he carefully wrote down, and then gave his own name, rank, regiment, etc., to each of the party.

The ambulance came up, and the wounded man was placed therein. A man had volunteered to go along as guide to show them a route by which the vehicle could reach the Union lines.

They all shook hands with him, and then he mounted the seat by the driver and was driven away, having passed through the strangest adventure that had thus far fallen to the lot of any Union officer.

His arrival at brigade headquarters with Captain Risley in an unconscious condition in an ambulance created a red-hot sensation among army officers. The general questioned him closely, and when he had heard his story, said:

"You did what was right. You have the one quality that makes a successful soldier—the determination never to be defeated in an undertaking."

"It is a determination to obey orders, general," he said. "I was sent to make the exchange, and bring him back, and that I was determined to do."

"Well, it's the same thing," remarked the general. "I am sorry he is so badly hurt; but rather than have him escape altogether."

To the surprise of everybody, two of the best surgeons in the brigade, after examining the wounded officer, pronounced his wounds not necessarily fatal.

"He may pull through," said one of them, "if he has an ordinary constitution and good blood."

"He has both, doctor," said Major Herbert. "I have known him for years."

They took him to a field hospital and extracted the bullet, after which he was placed under the best nurse to be had in the camp.

The quartermaster-general came up to the young major and said, in a low tone of voice:

"There is a young lady with my wife who wishes to see you when you have the leisure time to call on her."

"Yes, yes. I'll call on her at once. Is she as well as usual?"

"Yes. My wife is dead in love with her, and wants her to remain with her if it can be arranged. She thinks you ought to be consulted about it, though."

He called on the ladies at a farmhouse near by, and found Mary Holmes looking as sweet and pretty as ever.

She met him with many a shy blush and asked:

"Have you heard anything more from Winnie?"

"She is at the home of Captain St. Clair's mother, and the

captain says she should remain there until such time as she can cross the lines without any danger or discomfort. I sent her news of you by him, whom we exchanged for Captain Risley."

"Oh, has Captain Risley returned?"

"Yes."

"I am so sorry for him."

"He did not tell her the captain was wounded, or that he had any hand in effecting the exchange.

CHAPTER XX.

THE JUDGE IN CAMP.

Days and weeks passed, and young Herbert received his commission as a full-fledged colonel in the army. He looked more soldierly than ever in the uniform that he procured for the rank.

Mary Holmes was more proud of him and the attention he showed her than of anyone else in the army. She never once lost sight of the fact that he had won his rank by merit alone—that neither wealth nor social position had anything to do with it.

Major Coombs was now at the head of his regiment, and was daily expecting to be also commissioned colonel. He came to see Colonel Herbert and congratulate him.

"You have gone up ahead of me," he said, shaking his hand, "but I am not a bit jealous. I saw it in you before we left Dover. You will go up higher yet."

"I thank you, colonel," returned Herbert. "I hope we may both win the stars of a general."

"So do I. It is a laudable ambition. I am glad to see you appreciate it," and the old soldier then turned the conversation on Captain Risley's case.

"It will go hard with him," he said. "He is recovering rapidly, and inside of a fortnight will be placed on trial before court-martial. The judges have already been appointed."

"I am sorry he did not fall in that charge," remarked Herbert.

"Yes, it would have been better for him if he had."

Events came quick after that.

The enemy made a move that set the regiments of the great Union army in motion. Then a series of marches and counter-marches followed, the Union army getting nearer to the Confederate capital all the time.

Suddenly the two armies again met in deadly combat, and the earth shook under the tremendous roar of cannon and the tread of armed men.

Thousands of brave men fell on both sides, and in the smoke and shock of battle reputations were won and lost. Again did the gallant Colonel Herbert receive the charge of the enemy with the Spartan firmness that had won him fame. Again did the magnificent Black Horse Cavalry of the South break itself against his line, and reel back shattered and bleeding.

The general of the brigade dashed up to his side and asked:

"Can't you hold your ground without assistance, colonel?"

"Yes, general. My men give way only when dead!" he replied.

"The enemy is coming again!" cried the general, as he saw the gray line surging forward again, up the incline.

"Steady, men!" cried the young colonel. "Remember that this regiment has never given back an inch yet! Teach them a lesson they will not forget. The army of the Union must hear of you to-day. Give 'em lead to eat all the way up the hill! Now! Ready! Fire!"

Thus encouraged by the voice of their heroic young leader,

the men of the regiment stood like a stone wall, and the enemy was repulsed with great slaughter.

After the battle the enemy again fell back, and the Union advanced in their wake, only to find them once more drawn up in line of battle.

Again they fought, and again the name of a great battle was added to the list that would go down to the ages as an event in the history of nations.

The losses were terrible on both sides, and at the end of this one Colonel Herbert found himself in command of the brigade, the general and two senior colonels having been slain. Yet he did not seem to think he had any more responsibility resting on him than when he was simply a corporal in the Dover Guards.

When he made a report to the commanding general that officer sent for him.

He reported at once.

The general looked up at him in silence for a moment or two and then asked:

"How old are you, colonel?"

"I am not yet old enough to vote, general," he replied. "But I am old enough to help make history for my country and the old flag."

"By the Lord Harry!" exclaimed the general, "I like that answer! I was told you were too young to handle the brigade. Go back to your command and fight as you have been fighting, and all will be well."

He saluted, and marched out of the presence of the general, like one who had just won another victory.

"Somebody has been working against me in some way," he said to himself, as he made his way back to his command. "I'd like to know who it is. My age has been reported to the general, and he has been urged to put an older man in the place that is mine by all the rights dear to a soldier."

He had just reached his quarters when he heard a hearty voice call out:

"How are you, colonel?"

He wheeled and found himself face to face with Judge Holmes.

"Why, judge!" he exclaimed. "I am glad to see you!" and he extended his hand to the old gentleman.

"Thanks. I am glad to see you, too. So you are at the head of the regiment. Well, I expected it. You made an impression on my mind the night you volunteered the first man in Dover, which has never left me."

"Thanks. I am the head of the brigade now."

"What! A general?"

"No—only colonel commanding the brigade. I suppose I'll get the commission soon, if I live through one or two more battles."

"Which I hope you will," said the judge. "I came after Mary. Her mother can't stand the suspense any longer. I brought a letter from your mother to you," and he gave him a sealed letter.

"Thanks! I am glad to hear from mother. Mails are very uncertain when the army is on the move. Have you seen your daughter yet?"

"Yes, and do you know she doesn't want to go back home?"

"Indeed?"

"She wants to stay here with General —'s wife, and that lady declares that she cannot do without her."

"Well, she is not afraid of the enemy. You know she has been in battle and slain her man."

"Yes, and that's a queer reputation for a young lady to make, I should say."

"Well, at any rate, she is the pet of the army. If she would just once ride down the line she would get more cheers than the commander-in-chief, or the United States President. They

are all as eager to throw kisses at her as they are to throw bullets at the enemy."

"Well, I'm afraid they have turned her head. You have lost Winnie altogether, haven't you?"

"Yes, so far as getting letters from her are concerned. But somehow or other I have no fears for her safety whatever. That Captain St. Clair, with whose mother she is living, has impressed me as one of the most honorable men I ever met."

The judge accepted his invitation to make his tent his home while in camp, and the two men had quite a number of quiet conversations together.

"Do you know," said the judge, "that Captain Risley's father has had the Congressmen and Senators from our State working on the President in behalf of that unfortunate young man?"

"No, I didn't know it."

"Well, he has, and the probability is that he may simply be dismissed from the service instead of being tried before a court-martial."

"Well, that is the only way he can escape being shot."

"Do you think so?"

"I haven't a shadow of a doubt about it."

"Then I hope they may succeed."

Colonel Herbert made no comment. He was now in a position where he had to weigh well his words before uttering them. He had been looked upon as the enemy of the disgraced officer, and for that reason did not desire to say anything about the subject of his fate.

But Judge Holmes and the elder Risley were good friends of long standing. They were both wealthy, and the rich always stand by each other. He wanted to get the young officer to sign a petition to let Risley go without trial and be dismissed from the service.

"It would be unbecoming in me to do such a thing, judge," said the young colonel, shaking his head. "If he had been convicted and sentenced I would plead that his life be spared. It would be improper for any officer to do so."

"I never thought of that," said the judge. "Nevertheless, you might write me a note and say you would like to see him spared, and—"

"I cannot even do that," he said, interrupting him. "I shall do nothing not right and proper for an officer to do. If he is sentenced, I shall ask that his life be spared, but not before."

The judge was not pleased. He was surprised that the poor unknown mechanic at home had refused any request of his.

CHAPTER XXI.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

Judge Holmes gave up the task of trying to get the young colonel to sign a petition in the interest of Captain Risley, as he saw that he could not succeed in that direction.

"I am sorry you cannot do such a simple act of charity to an unfortunate comrade, colonel," he remarked as he placed the document in his pocket.

"Why can you not say that you are glad to see that I am a soldier who dares do his duty as he understands it, judge?" he asked. "I bear no malice, though he was the worst and most malignant enemy I ever had. Why not try to persuade his friends to cease trying to injure me while trying to save him?"

"Are any of his friends trying to injure you?"

"Yes. They have even gone to the general-in-chief and told him that I was too young to handle this brigade."

"Who are they?"

"I don't know, nor do I care. I am going to do just what I came here for—fight the enemy whenever and wherever I may meet him—and let the others go on and do as they please."

The judge went to see his daughter again, and told her what poor success he had met with in trying to enlist Herbert in the effort to save Risley.

"I think you might persuade him to do so," he said to her.

"I would not attempt to persuade him, even if I knew I would succeed, father," she said.

"Why not?"

"Because he feels that he owes his life to me, and would refuse me nothing that I would ask at his hands, even to the laying down of his life."

"He would not refuse you, then?"

"No, but I won't ask him," and she was firm. "He has refused you, and were I to ask him to do so he would have a poor opinion of me, knowing that he was under such obligations."

Her father did not urge the matter, and then he again besought her to go back home with him. She said if he insisted on her doing so she would go. But the wife of the quartermaster-general begged so hard that she might remain with her that he could not refuse.

He went back home again, leaving her behind, and the campaign against the enemy continued so lively that she was on the move all the time with the lady in whose charge she had been left.

Another battle was fought, and again thousands of brave men laid down their lives on both sides.

Just as the enemy was retiring Colonel Herbert received a minie ball in the shoulder. He was taken to a large farmhouse near the village of Hanover Courthouse, where a surgeon extracted the bullet.

It was not until the next morning that he was told that the lady of the house had a son also in the next room wounded—a Confederate officer.

"Tell her to come in, and see me," he said. "I want to thank her for the shelter of her roof."

The lady came in, accompanied by a young lady.

When they reached his bedside the young lady uttered a scream.

"Oh, my brother Will!" and threw herself on his breast.

"Winnie! Winnie! Sister! What are you doing here?"

"Oh, brother! This is Mrs. St. Clair! She is Captain St. Clair's mother! Captain St. Clair is badly wounded in the next room!"

"Madam, I am doubly in your debt," said Colonel Herbert, grasping the lady's hand. "Your son is the knightliest soldier I ever met, and you are the source of all his good qualities. I thank you a thousand times for all the kindnesses you and yours have shown to my sweet little sister."

"We have all learned to love her for herself alone," said Mrs. St. Clair. "I hope your wound is not serious."

"Thanks. It is more painful than serious. Give my compliments to your son, and say that I regret to hear that he is hurt."

She did so, and the gallant cavalryman was glad to hear that the brother of Winnie was again with her.

Colonel Herbert ordered a guard to be placed around the house and premises so as to protect the property from depredation.

Then he told Winnie that Mary Holmes was with the army.

"Where is she? Tell me where I can find her?"

"Find the quartermaster-general and get from him the whereabouts of his wife. They are together."

Winnie wrote a note, and a negro man was hired to hunt up the headquarters of the quartermaster-general. It took him two days to find him. He then found Mary Holmes and gave her Winnie's note.

Mary gave a scream of joy, and a half hour later was on a mule, which was led by the negro, going to meet her dearest friend.

"Mary!"

"Winnie!"

They embraced and kissed and cried, after which they went in to see the colonel.

"Ah, you two have met again!", he said.

"Yes," said Winnie. "We are all three together again. Oh, if we could live together always!"

"I am sorry you are hurt again," said Mary, tears coming into her eyes.

"Thanks. You were not near to save me this time."

"I can only wish that I had been," she replied.

"Tell Winnie everything that has happened since the day you two were parted on the battlefield. What a lot of things you two have to talk about."

"Oh, Mary! Just to think, he is a colonel!" exclaimed Winnie, in an impulse of love and pride.

"He will be a general," said Mary. "He has commanded the brigade for a month now."

"And he so young, too."

"Yes. I think he is the youngest colonel in the army," and as she said that she leaned over and added in a whisper in Winnie's ear:

"And the bravest and handsomest, too."

Mary then went into the next room to see and greet Captain St. Clair. He recognized her and gave her a cordial welcome.

Mrs. St. Clair and her daughter tendered to Mary the hospitality of their home, which she accepted for a few days in order to be with Winnie and help her nurse her brother.

The army moved on, and in a few days they were all in the rear, with straggling parties passing to and fro all the time.

One day a regiment of Confederate cavalry came by, and an officer came in to see who the Union officer was.

"Ah, it is you, major!" exclaimed the newcomer. "I am sorry you are hurt."

He was one of the officers who had witnessed his duel with Risley, and they shook hands like two old friends.

CHAPTER XXII.

GENERAL HERBERT.

The exigencies of war had brought friends and foes together under the roof of the brave captain of the Black Horse Cavalry of the Confederacy. The meeting of the two girl friends was a joyous one indeed. They fell into each other's arms and cried, kissed, and laughed by turns. Mrs. St. Clair sympathized with them in her womanly heart, and, though she regarded their friends as the enemies of her country, she was not their personal enemy. She was a true woman above all things, and it was that phase of her character that had asserted itself when she found the two girls under her roof, together with the wounded brother of one of them.

"Oh, Mary!" cried Winnie to her bosom friend. "We never dreamed that we would get mixed up in this war as we have been."

"No, dear," said Mary. "I did not, and yet I do not regret that we came to help nurse our brave boys in the hospitals."

"No—no—but think of what we have been through. I don't see how we have passed through it all and still live."

"Nor do I. Do you know that your brother is a general?"

"He has command of the brigade, I know, but he is still only a colonel," said Winnie.

"He is acting as a general," said Mary. "The commission

will soon come to him. Oh, what a brave, gallant soldier he is! How proud our people at home are when they hear of his brave deeds! Your mother is the proudest woman in Dover to-day, and well she may be."

"She is not one whit more proud of him than I am, Mary. I always knew he was brave as a lion," and she looked the pride she felt in her gallant brother.

"What a pity that two such men as he and Captain St. Clair should seek each other's lives on the battlefield?"

"Yes, for Captain St. Clair is one of the most perfect gentlemen I ever knew. He saved my life on that awful day, and rode into battle at the head of his troopers, holding me on his saddle. He has treated me as though I were a sister ever since. I shall never forget him."

"Of course not. What a pity he is arrayed against the flag of his country."

"I made that same remark to him one day, and he said he was not fighting the flag of his country. He said he was born here—in this house—and that he was fighting for his country still. New York was not his country. Virginia was. I did not know what to say, for it did seem to me that he was right, for he had not left his country at all."

"Well, we girls don't know much about politics," said Mary, laughing. "But we know that our side is right, and that's all we need to know."

They had much to say to each other, but they did not neglect the wounded soldiers to do so. They were unremitting in their attention to them. Mary gave all her time to Colonel Herbert, and Winnie, while not neglecting her brother, proved a faithful nurse to Captain St. Clair.

One day the rush of a squadron of horse startled them. It was a squadron of Confederate cavalry. They surrounded the house and a young officer entered.

He was Lieutenant Banning, now a captain.

He knew that Winnie Herbert was there, for Captain St. Clair had told him so.

"Ah!" he said, as he bowed to her. "I am glad to see you again, Miss Herbert. I heard that your gallant brother had been made general of brigade. Is it true?"

"I really don't know," she stammered. She was afraid her brother would be made a prisoner, wounded though he was.

"Well, I hope he has. He is a gallant fellow, and well deserves promotion. I am a captain myself now, and I came to tell Mrs. St. Clair that her son has been made a colonel. How is he?"

"He is doing well. Your good news will soon make him a well man again. Come, let me show you to his room," and she led the way into the room where Captain St. Clair was confined.

"Ah, Colonel St. Clair," greeted the young officer, "hurry up and take command of your regiment."

"Colonel, did you say?" exclaimed his mother, coming into the room at that moment.

"Yes, madam. He has been made a full colonel. He will be a general next, as he well deserves to be. I congratulate both of you. I must hurry away. A large body of Federal cavalry is pursuing us. I merely stopped to give you the good news."

"But, captain," said the wounded officer, "what is the news from Lee? Will he be able to drive the enemy back?"

"Yes. We think the next battle will utterly crush him. He is weaving a web that will enmesh him irretrievably."

"Ah! What a grand soldier is Lee!"

"Yes, the greatest of the age. He fights against terrific odds in every battle. Good-by," and he shook hands with all in the room, and then hurriedly left the house, without once suspecting that a wounded Union officer was under the same roof.

As soon as the cavalry was gone, Winnie hurried into her brother's room, and said:

"Oh, they didn't know you were here!"

"No. Well, I am glad they did not," said Colonel Herbert.

"Why, what would they have done to you, brother?"

"They would have made me a prisoner of war."

"What! A wounded man!"

"Yes—they would have taken my parole and left me here. That would have kept me out of the field until I had been regularly exchanged."

"Well, I am so glad they did not find you then," remarked Mary.

"Thank you," he said. "You appreciate the feelings of a soldier."

"I think I know how you feel about it," she replied.

Mrs. St. Clair came in and said to the young colonel:

"My son has been made a colonel in the Confederate army, and has sent his congratulations to you on your escape from capture a few minutes ago."

"Give him my thanks, madam, and allow me to congratulate both you and him on his promotion. He is a brave, gallant soldier, who is worthy of all praise."

"Thanks, sir. I appreciate it all the more coming from you, who have fought your way up from the ranks."

Several days passed, during which the two wounded men improved very fast under the careful nursing of the two girls. Then came the news of another great battle in which thousands of lives were lost, but with no decisive results. The genius of Lee seemed to overshadow every battlefield, though he fought against enormous odds all the time.

The courier who brought the news to the young colonel also brought a letter from Colonel Coombs, addressed to him as "General Herbert," saying the president had sent his commission as brigadier-general.

He handed the note to Mary Holmes, who was seated by his bedside, saying:

"Show it to Winnie. She will be pleased."

"Do you mean for me to read it, too?" she asked.

"Yes, of course. You are one of my dear friends."

She read it and extended her hand, saying:

"Let me be the first to congratulate you."

He pressed her hand and looked her in the eyes and said:

"I have one other ambition—one other great hope that fills my whole heart and soul. If that could be attained I would have no more to ask for in life."

"Why, what can that be?" she asked. "You don't want to be President, do you?"

"I wouldn't object to that; but I'd rather be the husband of Mary Holmes than be President of the United States," and he held her hand and looked up into her eyes as he spoke.

She turned pale as the pillow on which lay his head, then blushed rosy red.

"Will Herbert," she faltered, sinking down into the chair by his bedside, "do you want me to be your wife?"

"I do, Mary, I love you—I love you!"

"I'll be your wife," she softly said, looking him in the face. "I could wish for no greater happiness in life."

He pressed her hand and she leaned over and kissed him for the first time.

"Ah! I shall get well now. Go and tell Winnie that you are the promised wife of a general in the Union army."

She took the letter and went into the other room. Mrs. St. Clair and Winnie were in there.

"Oh, Winnie! Your brother has been made a general!"

Winnie sprang up and exclaimed joyfully:

"Oh, I am so glad for mother's sake!" and she snatched

the letter from her hand and read it. Then she ran into the other room to kiss her brother.

"He is a brave fellow and a brilliant soldier," said young St. Clair. "He deserves it. I am glad for his sake and the sake of his sister and mother."

Mary followed Winnie into the other room, and then the two girls had each a sweet story to tell the other.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE GOD OF LOVE ROUTS THE GOD OF WAR.

"Oh, Mary!" cried Winnie, throwing herself into the arms of her friend. "Only think of our Willie being a general! How proud mother will be when she hears it!"

"Yes. You can't imagine how proud and happy I am, too, Winnie, for I am going to be his wife."

"Oh, mercy!" gasped Winnie, who had not dreamed of such a possibility. "I—I—am so glad," and she hugged and kissed her a dozen times in as many seconds. "I—I—am engaged, too!"

"You! You engaged!" cried Mary, in blank amazement.

"Yes, and I am so happy. The man who saved my life on the battlefield has asked for my love and hand. I gave both to him."

The young general heard her story in profound astonishment.

"What will mother say?" he asked of his sister.

"It is not a question of North or South, but one of love and happiness," said Winnie. "We love and that is enough."

"Yes, yes, that's true. He is as good a man as could be found in all the world. The war will not be on forever. It will end some day."

"Yes, and then we will all be so happy," and the two girls embraced and kissed each other again.

Winnie and Mary then told each other how the declarations had come about, and they were certainly the two happiest girls in all the world at that moment.

"But are you going to be a rebel, Winnie?" Mary asked.

Winnie started.

She had not thought of that.

She was a patriot all the time, but had not thought of war when the god of love touched her heart with his magic wand.

"No," she said. "I am not going to rebel against my country or my love. I am a non-combatant. I am going to have a little union of my own, and be true to it all the time."

"Good for you, Winnie!" cried her brother. "Keep out of the war and be as happy as you can. But you have gone over to the enemy all the same."

She laughed and said:

"Well, I couldn't help myself. He captured me on the battlefield, and I have never been exchanged, and—and—I don't want to be, either!"

"Oh, you little rebel!" cried Mary, and all three laughed heartily over the remark.

Mrs. St. Clair came in to congratulate the young general on his promotion.

"Thanks, madam," said Herbert. "Let your congratulations come again. I am engaged to be married to my nurse."

The good lady congratulated him, and kissed Mary, saying: "I wish you both all the happiness that can come to mortals on earth." Then, turning to Winnie, she said:

"My son has just told me his story, and asked me to take you to my heart as my own child. I love you for yourself

and doubly so for his sake," and she folded her in her motherly arms, and pressed her to her heart.

"I have a dear, good, sweet mother," said Winnie, "but I shall love you as much as I love her," and she threw her arms about her neck and called her "mother."

"Oh, if this cruel war could now end," exclaimed the good noble young men lying here wounded with bullets, and these mother, her eyes filling with tears. "Just look at these two young hearts clinging to them so fondly!"

"Yes," said Mary. "It is a great sin—a great sin. Thousands fell in battle yesterday. Oh, when will it end!"

"Well, don't discuss it," said Herbert. "Go to your love, sister, and let mine come and make me happy. Oh, I am getting well fast!"

The two happy girls laughed, and Winnie and her lover's mother left the room together, leaving them to themselves.

The days sped swiftly and events transpired quickly. The great struggle went on, and another battle was fought. The stars and stripes floated over the bloody field in triumph.

The two armies then rested for a time from the work of destroying each other.

The young general rapidly recovered from his wound. So did the young colonel. The latter had been paroled, and could not rejoin his command until he had been exchanged.

"I am forced to stay at home," he said to Winnie. "Come, let's be married, and be as happy as circumstances will let us."

"If my brother will consent," said she, blushing rosy red.

"Well, I'll see that he does," said the young colonel. "I say, general, I want you to consent to my marriage to Winnie at once. She leaves it to you."

"You have my consent. I have no right to refuse. But persuade her to make Mary consent to a double wedding."

So it was arranged. Mary at last yielded, and a day or two later a minister came to the house and performed the marriage ceremony for them.

A few days later General Herbert was required to appear before a court-martial to testify as to the conduct of Captain Risley on the day he was exchanged as a prisoner of war.

"Poor Risley," he said to his bride, "I fear it will go hard with him."

"You won't say anything to make it worse?" Mary said.

"I fear I cannot do otherwise. He had behaved so badly that I will have to submit to questions which must be answered."

"Will they shoot him?"

"I fear they will. I don't see how they can do otherwise. The laws of war renders it very necessary in the interest of discipline."

"I am sorry for him."

"So am I, but he has no one to blame but himself."

"No, I suppose not. Yet we all expected such a good report of him when he led our brave Dover boys to the front."

General Herbert attended the court-martial in the uniform of his rank. The disgraced prisoner looked at him, and was surprised at the soldierly appearance he made in the uniform.

But in his pride and conceit he did not salute him, a fact that did not escape the argus-eyed judge advocate.

The young general told his story to the court, and then submitted to cross-questions by the prisoner's counsel.

"You have been and are still the personal enemy of the prisoner, are you not?" was asked him.

"No," he replied, "I am not and never was his enemy."

"Did you not once have a personal altercation with him?"

"Yes. Before we were mustered into the service I knocked him down for calling me a liar."

"Ah! struck your superior officer, did you?"

"Yes."

"Is that your idea of discipline?"

"Yes. Were the general of the army to call me a liar I would knock him down on the spot, even in the face of the enemy. Yet at the next moment I would obey an order from him even if I knew it led to my death."

The prisoner was convicted and sentenced to be shot.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

No other verdict could have been rendered. His conduct had been such that the entire army had been jeopardized on the battlefield.

Yet the young general was very sorry for the necessity of the verdict.

"Mary, we must save him if we can. There is but one way in which it can be done."

"What is that?"

"You must go to the President and beg for a reprieve."

"Me."

"Yes. I cannot leave my command. I will write a letter to the President and you must take it to him. He has a great big heart, and when he sees your sweet face and hears your story he will grant the appeal."

"I will go," she said. "He once proposed to me, and I cannot bear to hear of his coming to such a disgraceful end. Oh, I do hope the good President will spare his life!"

"He cannot resist you, dear," said the young general, kissing her. "Tell him how long you have been married to me—the youngest general in the army—and his heart will warm toward you."

She set out to take the nearest train in the rear of the army, and was soon hurrying on her way to the capital of the struggling republic.

In the meantime, the shooting squad had been selected, and the morning of the third day after the trial and sentence was to witness the execution.

Some of the members of the Dover Guards, who had been exchanged, called to see the condemned man in the guard tent.

"I am to die," he said to them, "solely because of the dislike Herbert has always entertained toward me. He hated me because I beat him for the lieutenancy of the company when it was first organized."

"Did he cause you to make that charge that day without orders?" one of them asked.

"No, but he is at the bottom of the prosecution on account of it."

"Even if that be true, you made the case for the prosecution by making the fatal charge."

"Yes, that is so, captain," said the other. "I don't think you can blame the general justly. He did not want to appear against you at all, so I heard Colonel Coombs say."

"Ah? He was against me, too."

"Yes—every officer in the army is against you."

The morning of the execution came. He was led out to the place and blindfolded. The shooting squad was in position, and the order was about to be given them to fire when a woman on horseback was seen riding forward at full speed.

"Stop! Stop! Hold on!" cried a score of voices, and the officer in command of the squad hesitated.

"Reprieved! Reprieved!" cried Mary Herbert, as she dashed up in breathless haste and handed the official document with the name of Abraham Lincoln signed to it.

"Yes," said the officer, "the President has reprieved him," and he gave the order to conduct the prisoner back to the guard tent.

When he was told that Mary Holmes, the young bride of the youngest general in the army, had secured the reprieve, he said to himself:

"She loves me. She always did love me, but his rapid promotion fascinated her. Her hand is his, but her heart is mine."

He never met her again, for he was dismissed in disgrace, and disappeared forever from the places that once knew him.

And that was the end of the military career of Captain Risley.

The army was again on the move, and Colonel St. Clair and his Northern bride remained at the old homestead. The negroes had been scattered, and the stock appropriated by the Union troops. The desolation of war was all about them. Yet they were happy in their love for each other.

Time wore on and Colonel St. Clair was exchanged. He placed himself at the head of his regiment and fought like a hero for his cause.

A year passed, and one day a flag of truce appeared. The enemy wanted to bury their dead. It was in front of Herbert's brigade. One of his aides inquired as to whose command it was in front of them.

"General St. Clair's brigade," said the Confederate.

When General Herbert heard of that he went out and saw the young officer in charge of the burial squad.

"Do you belong to General St. Clair's command?" he asked.
"I do."

"Will you take a message to him from me?"

"Yes, if it is proper for me to do so," was the reply.

"It is entirely proper. His wife is my only sister. I am General Herbert. Tell him that I send my love to my sister, and say that our mother is well. Do you know whether she has a child or not?"

"Yes, she has a baby. I saw it announced in a paper a month or two ago."

"Tell him that I am also a father; that my wife and child are in Dover and both well. I thank you for your kindness."

Thus Winnie got news from her brave brother. She did not hear from him again until after the surrender of the remnant of Lee's once magnificent army at Appomattox Court-house.

On that memorable field the two young generals met and shook hands. They were bronzed veterans in service, though young in years.

"It is all over now," said General Herbert, as he shook the hand of the brave Confederate.

"Yes, and we are a ruined people," sighed the other.

"Not quite. Your people are too brave and honorable for ruin to follow defeat. The Union is saved, and whatever prosperity attends that your people will share. Winnie, is she well?"

"She was three weeks ago, the last time I heard from her. Little Willie Herbert St. Clair was well, too."

"Ah, you two did not forget me, then?"

"No. We have remembered you always. I will say for Winnie that she has never wavered in her love for the Union."

"Ah! Her heart was always right. I would like to see her. I will go home with you as soon as I can get permission to do so."

A week later he was again at the home of the St. Clairs, where he found Winnie the happy mother of a little boy one year old, whose name was Willie Herbert St. Clair. She was so glad to see him that she laughed and cried by turns.

Two weeks later General Herbert returned home to Dover. The people, proud of their young hero, met him at the train in the evening with a carriage without horses, and a thousand torches, and pulled him and his wife and baby boy through the streets, amidst shouts of welcome. A grand arch stretched across one of the main streets with the words in big letters:

"From Corporal to General."

THE END.

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